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OUT of the OZARKS

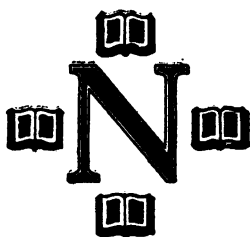
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OUT OF THE OZARKS



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BY
WILLIAM N. RUGGLES



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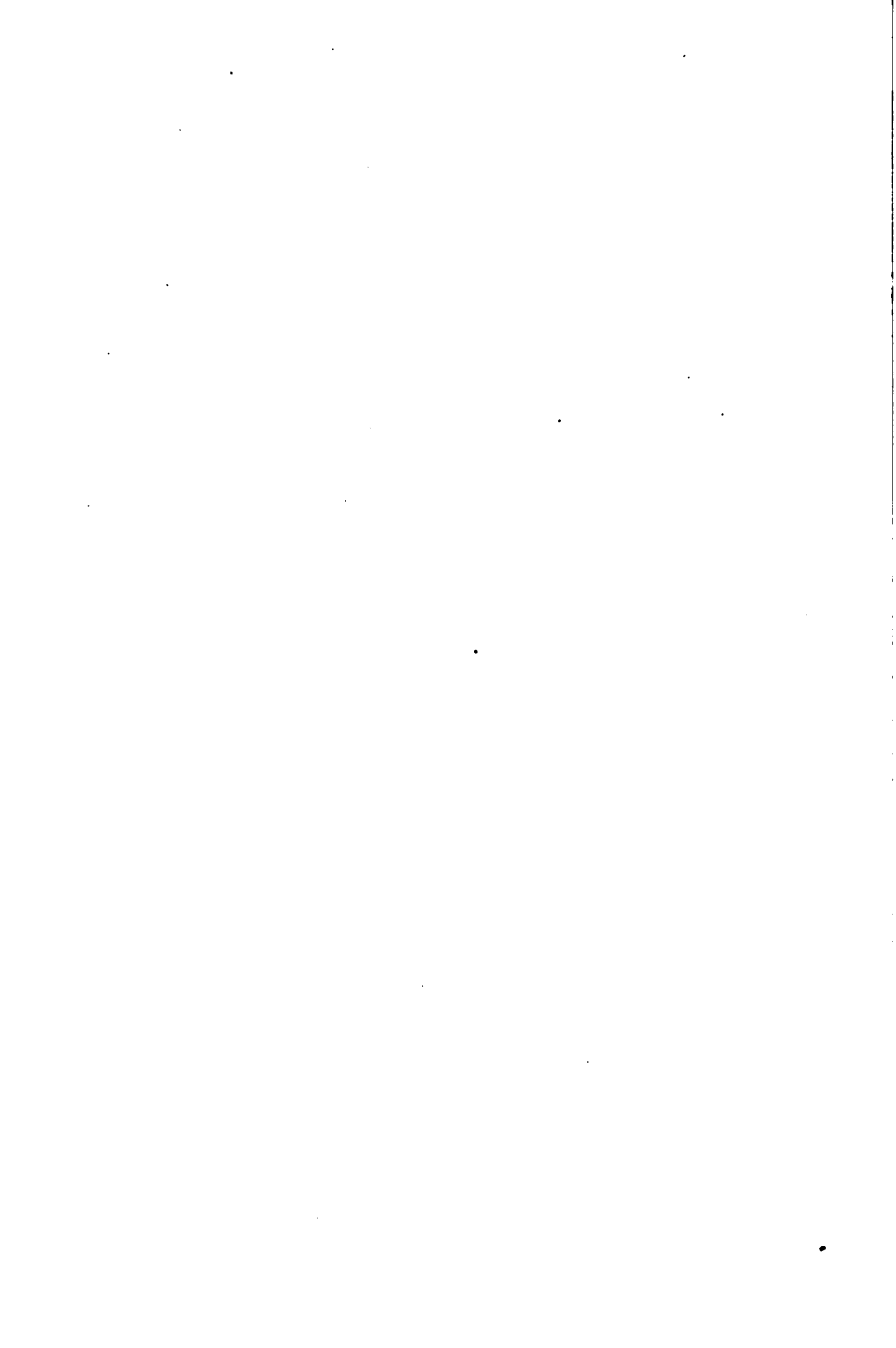
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*This story is dedicated to the life of the
sweet child, Benjamin.*

"Diddy."



OUT OF THE OZARKS

CHAPTER I

PEN PENNIX, for such is the protagonist's name, —if not his true one, it is at least the name his playmates gave him, and they usually name each other well,—was born in the wild-woods of the Ozarks of Missouri, which is perhaps the most interesting and picturesque region of the inhabitable globe.

The Ozarks is the habitat and natural home of the festive, nocturnal opossum, of the gray and red squirrel, the wild turkey, which should have been the emblem bird of our country, for America is the only place where the wild turkey makes his home; the coon, the fierce panther, the wild cat, and the dangerous timber wolf; and birds of the rarest plumage and sweetest song build their nests and hatch their young undisturbed in its forest homes.

In the Ozarks, too, all kinds of wild fruits, those that grow in a semi-tropical clime, abound in profusion. There are the pungent persimmon, the luscious pawpaw—the "Missouri banana"; the wild plum, so juicy and tart; the May cherry, the crab apple, the May apple—and no boy ate as many of these delicate, moist, sleek and sweet-scented

apples as Pen Pennix; the summer and winter grapes, which have no counterpart in the tame grape—all these grow and ripen in their season.

Flowers of many kinds and colors, the wild rose, the lily, the pansy, and the wild morning-glory, tinge the hills and dells with their delicate hues and fill the air with their perfume.

The hickory nut, walnut, butternut, hazelnut, acorns of many kinds, chinquapins, mulberries, huckleberries, hackberries are too common to be appreciated; and there are strawberries, dewberries, and blackberries.

Springs gurggle up and rush forth in clear, sparkling waters, and large rivers, winding by perpendicular bluffs and through woodland glens, caves and valleys, lend a charm and romance to the country through which they flow.

It was among such scenes as these that Pen Pennix passed his boyhood days, and it is there that he wishes to pass the last years of his life. He hopes to be there when earth shall pass away and the visions of a better world appear; there, in the bosom of mother earth, in the soil he loves so well, among the wonders of the Ozarks he hopes to be buried; beneath those benign skies he hopes to sleep in peace until the Resurrection Morn.

Pennix's ancestors were of English stock, who emigrated from Essex, England, in Colonial days, and his father's side settled in New York while it was yet a Dutch colony.

From New York they emigrated to Missouri, and Pennix's grandfather built the first smelting furnace

that was constructed and operated in that State. In those good old days "iron works" were small concerns compared to the modern plants. The old site is at Pilot Knob, where there is yet hidden away enough hematite iron ore to last the world until the crack of doom.

Pennix's father learned the blacksmith's trade and followed it until middle life, when he engaged in the mercantile business; and last he became a tiller of the soil, in which pursuit he was engaged when Pennix was born.

Pennix never knew what part of England his mother's people came from, but it was claimed by some members of the family that his grandmother was an "own born" niece of the great Lord Nelson, who, by the way, was the greatest sea captain that ever upheld England's maritime supremacy. "Aunt Becca" herself was quite sure she was a lineal descendant of the House of Peers, and that a great fortune was stowed away in the Bank of England and needed only the asking to be obtained.

Pennix, however, did not let that give him any concern. If it were true, he knew that there had been a great degeneration somewhere along the line; if it were not true, the Pennix family was a fair average as families are considered in our country where ancestors, however obscure or illustrious, neither hinder nor help in the business and social world.

In fact, the better part of prudence suggested that one had better be silent on the subject of illustrious ancestors, and especially had one better be

silent in the Ozarks, for there, least of all places, would pomp and ancestral pretensions be given credence and preference.

But in later years, as Pennix studied history, he attached importance to the achievements of the English race, especially in the French and Indian War, whereby the customs and laws of the Anglo-Saxons supplanted those of the Latin race on the continent of North America. He had nothing but compassion and contempt for any American who could read the achievements of the Anglo-Saxon race and feel no pride or joy in the thought that he too belongs to that race. Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham; Washington at Valley Forge and Trenton; Arnold and Gates at Saratoga; Paul Jones sweeping the high seas and capturing ships while they were anchored in presumed security in their own home harbors; Perry on Lake Erie and Jackson at New Orleans; Meade and Lee fighting the greatest battle of modern times at Gettysburg; the death struggle around Richmond; Dewey at Manila; Schley at Santiago; Roosevelt at El Caney; Hobson sinking the *Merrimac*; Funston capturing jungles—all these illustrate the military prowess, the strategic and inventive genius of this great race of men, the Anglo-Saxon.

Study the subjugation of the Western wilderness and the heroism of the pioneer; the history of Texas' immortal valor—Houston and his valiant band at San Jacinto and their triumph over Mexican oppression; Scott's march from Vera Cruz to the palace of the Montezuma, and say, if you can,

that there is nothing to be proud of in the achievements of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Pen Pennix was not born in a log-cabin nor in a palace, but in one of those old-fashioned houses so common in the South in ante-bellum days, a house with long porches, wide halls, large rooms, great fireplaces and stone chimneys.

The residence stood upon a slope that gradually ascended from Brazil Valley to the top of a level ridge, and in the midst of a forest of walnut and cedar trees. There was no underbrush near the house and the ground was covered with a rich growth of blue-grass.

Farther back, however, and near the top of the hill, which was wide and level, were to be found thickets of hazel and persimmon bushes with extensive areas of hickory trees, cedar trees, and every known variety of oaks, grape vines, wild berries; and the flowers peculiar to the upland grew in sweet profusion, mingling their tints with the green foliage of the forest and the green grass beneath.

In front, eastward, and below the house lay Brazil Valley, the greater part of which was in cultivation. This valley was as fertile as the Nile or the delta of the Mississippi. Sycamore and burr-oak trees, seven to nine feet in circumference, of towering heights, and hard maple trees almost as large, abounded in the primeval forest.

On the other side of the valley and at the base of high woodland hills flowed the limpid waters of the Brazil over its pebbly bed. Two miles toward the south flowed the classic Meramec, which for

clearness of water and beautiful scenery cannot be surpassed either in Europe or America. It is an old saying among the people along its banks that no man ever drank of its waters but returned to drink again, and sooner or later settled in one of its many beautiful valleys.

Near the home of Pennix and at the foot of the hill were the accustomed spring and gourd, where the water, cool in summer and warm in winter, arose in spiral whirls from its rocky bottom, and after passing through the old stone spring house went on "to join the brimming river," as Tennyson's brook did.

The Blue Spring, whose azure depths have never yet been fathomed, is the head-waters of an ordinary river, while the Rush Spring, on the banks of the Meramec, spouting up from the deep, dark and hidden recesses of a cavern, would, if the waters were properly piped and confined, supply St. Louis, 100 miles away, with as pure and clear water as ever flowed from the depths of the earth, and in sufficient quantities to answer all the needs of that great metropolis for a hundred years yet to come.

Brazil Bluff and Bald Knob were two notable landmarks and observation sites located near Pennix's home. In fact, Brazil Bluff was on his father's farm and Bald Knob only about two miles distant.

The perpendicular walls of the former fronted the great Brazilian valley, and from its plateau summit could be had a beautiful view of the valley and river for miles in either direction. Its extensive summit was covered with black and red haw bushes,

and huge rocks were scattered here and there throughout the natural grove of forest trees, vines, and flowers.

Bald Knob was entirely different from Brazil Bluff in contour, form, and appearance. Its summit could only be reached from its northerly slope, and its rocky plateau was destitute of all forms of vegetable life, save and except scrubby cactus plants and an occasional pale, sickly-looking, yellow flower.

Some mining, however, had been done, in years past, for a queer rock called "tiff"; but Pennix was never able to ascertain what this rock is good for. It is evidently a misnomer, for "tiff" means a draught of liquor. He remembers only the "diggings," and that the "tiff" peeled off in strata and was mostly transparent and quite brittle.

The southern boundary of Bald Knob is a perpendicular wall of rock a few thousand feet high, at the base of which flows the Meramec. The sides and slopes of the other half are covered in jungle confusion with vines, berries, nut trees, cedars, and pawpaws. The soil is loose, somewhat rocky and black, and well adapted to the growth of grapes and berries. The view from the summit of Bald Knob is one of the best in America, or for that matter in the world. The Meramec winds like a silver thread through the valley, and farms, houses, and forests dot the panorama below. Bald Knob was Pennix's favorite resort, and he always felt the inspiration of the view it commanded.

Why it has not been more frequented as a summer resort, why the people of St. Louis, in particu-

lar, do not spend the summer season at this cool and beautiful place, where shade and sunshine, hunting and fishing, swimming and digging are as free as the air, is a question. Probably because it is only the distant, the remote, the unattainable that allure and for which men sigh and pine and die. " 'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view."

People of Missouri go to Colorado to ascend Pike's Peak who have never stood on the heights of Bald Knob and gazed upon the beautiful valley below; and they go long distances to bathe in the waters of Great Salt Lake, where the swimmer can't even dive, when they have never known the pleasures of a swim or a dive off a rock into the crystal waters of the Meramec. People go wild over the thought of an orange grove in California or Florida, and they have never tasted the oranges of the Ozarks, "the big red apple," or smacked their lips over the pawpaws of the Ozarks, which are so much more wholesome and delicious that comparison is impossible.

CHAPTER II

ABOUT the earliest event that Pennix can remember was being baptized by "Brother Tub," the Methodist circuit-rider, whose mode of baptizing was by sprinkling. Pennix remembers of having entered his complaint at the time the water was applied, but he was quickly hushed and soothed into silence by the persuasive voice of his mother.

He vaguely remembers, too, a small battle or skirmish that was fought between the Confederate and Union forces on a calm Sunday afternoon. For a few hours there could be distinctly heard the fierce rattle of musketry and the shouts of the men as the lines advanced or receded. The greatest alarm seemed to prevail among the home folks during the time. The darkies left their cabins and came running to the house for protection and safety, and fear and confusion prevailed until late in the evening when all became still; one side retreated, leaving its dead and wounded on the battlefield for the enemy to bury.

Some of the wounded, probably all of them, were brought to the house, and two of the large rooms were converted into a hospital; while guns, ammunition, and sabers were stored away upstairs.

Pennix remembered that some of them wore blue clothes, some gray, and others the raiment of the

private citizen; but it made no difference whether they were "Feds" or "Rebs," they were wounded men and their suffering called for aid. Within a few days they were removed along with their military stores. Just where they were taken to is unknown, but it is fair to presume that most of them were citizens of that region and came to the home of "Uncle Ben," knowing that they would be well cared for until arrangements for their better treatment could be obtained.

Pennix's father was a slave owner, but a Union man at heart, although it was dangerous at that time to proclaim such sentiment from the housetops. As he was an old man and was respected for miles and miles around, the only disturbances and molestations he suffered came from marauding bands, who, under the guise of Confederate or Union soldiers, pillaged and laid waste the country. His losses consisted of corn, wheat, horses, and cattle, provisions and chickens, and no compensation was ever offered or made. Sometimes, however, a worn-out, jaded horse was left to take the place of the fresh one taken. But the old man was never abused or insulted, and his life was never threatened.

One loss which Pennix never forgot was that of a pet bantam rooster. Many days had Pennix and his beautiful beauty taken strolls together through the woods in quest of bugs and worms, so prized by all high-living chickens.

When the soldier shot "Sweeto" from his perch, which was the limb of the little locust tree near the hen-house, and Pennix beheld his favorite pet lying

dead at his feet, he burst into tears. The soldier, accustomed to scenes of carnage, was moved to pity and expressed regret that he had shot that particular chicken, and then he carried "Sweeto" and other fowls off to the soldier camp, located not far away.

About the time the war closed the neighborhood was thrown into considerable flurry because a family by the name of Billings had moved into the "Pill Cabin," which was located in an old open field.

This cabin, located about two miles from Pennix's home, had been abandoned for many years, in fact it was considered haunted. It had been a rendezvous for "bushwhackers" during the war. Several times during those troublesome years this cabin had been taken and retaken by the contending forces, and many schemes, mostly infamous, had been planned within its dark, mud-daubed walls.

Many of the old women in the neighborhood, most of whom believed in the supernatural, claimed that this old cabin was once the home of a family of spiritualists, and that their spirits yet hovered within its walls and their ghosts could yet be seen in the old field on a dark night. No one cared to visit the cabin either by day or by night.

Therefore, when a real live colonel of the Confederate Army and his family moved into this feared place, the neighbors, or some of them at least, were bewildered, and assembled for consultation and mutual protection and defense. Some thought that the stranger should be asked to vacate the cabin and leave the country; others thought that no possible

harm could come from the family occupying the cabin, and discredited the story of ghosts, spirits, and goblins; while others predicted calamities, such as more war, pestilence, famine, and even the end of the world.

The Colonel, however, was not in the least disturbed by these reports or by the agitation of the neighbors. He had come from Tennessee, and his family consisted of himself, wife, a son, Earl, and two daughters, Ethel and Cora. The Colonel was looked upon by the neighbors as a superior being, a character to be feared and respected. He became a frequent visitor at the home of Pennix, and a mutual respect and affinity sprang up between the two families.

The war was the Colonel's favorite theme of conversation, and for hours at a time he would relate how his soldiers fell around him; how his forces won here and lost there; what hardships he and his comrades suffered; how his family had suffered during the war, and he had not been able to relieve them; how he had been reduced from independence to beggary and want, and now in his old days he had neither home, money, nor "niggers."

The Colonel did not exaggerate or magnify the distressing and destitute conditions of his family. They were, judging from their appearances and surroundings, in very needy circumstances. There was but little money in the country at that time, as the Confederate scrip, which had been the principal money of the country, had collapsed with the Confederacy; but the country had an abundance of food-

stuffs, and as every family made its own clothing, its own beds and bedding, there was no occasion to fear destitution, at least, not in most homes.

Pennix's heart was touched with sympathy for this man, yet he looked up to him with a feeling of awe and reverence, and when the Colonel deigned to speak to the child his words seemed messages of rapture and glory. He always remembered the Colonel, and as he looked back through the vista of time he saw the tall man with black beard, high forehead, and small brown eyes, aquiline nose, white teeth, and as straight as any Indian that ever trod the forest trail. His deep, mellow voice, his dignified bearing and gentle manners could never be forgotten, and it was Pennix's opinion that the Colonel was not only a born leader of men, but an intrepid soldier, and a finished scholar, whose education was complete in all its parts and qualified him for almost everything. He was but one of thousands who fought bravely and well for a mistaken cause, and probably lived to see the day when all agree that the South is better off under the Stars and Stripes than it would have been under the Stars and Bars.

Soon after the Colonel and his family moved into the Pill Cabin, Mrs. Billings and her oldest daughter, Ethel, came over to Pennix's home, and he was permitted to return with them to carry a live chicken which was given them for their dinner.

On entering the cabin, with its bare floor and mud-daubed walls, hung here and there with a picture of a Confederate leader or a battle scene, Pennix noticed a little girl, about seven or eight years

old, sitting by the great fireplace and much absorbed in a small book, which she continued to read for a few moments after her mother had entered. Presently the little girl laid her book aside, arose and came forward, and was introduced by her mother as "My baby girl, Cora." She took Pennix's hand in hers, and in a childlike way bade him welcome. She then stroked the feathers of the chicken, which Pennix still held in his arm, and talked to it in a caressing way. Presently Mrs. Billings took the chicken out of doors and the two children were alone together. Pennix stood bewildered and absorbed in the presence of this little girl. Never before had he seen such a dream of beauty; the fair and rosy cheeks, the brown eyes, the dark hair which hung in curls over her shoulders, the round and dimpled face, the broad forehead and lovely little form were a wonder to the boy. Soon the little girl broke the spell by asking Pennix if he could read and write.

"No," he replied, "I have never been at school and I don't know my letters."

"Neither have I," she said, "but I am studying my lessons at home, and mamma pronounces all the hard words for me and hears me recite every day. I am going to study. Isn't there any one at your home who would hear your lessons, so that you could get an education too?"

"Yes, I have a sister, who sometimes teaches school, but she does not want to be bothered with me, and I have no primer to study from," said Pennix.

"You may have my old one, as I use a first reader

now," and the sweet child went in search of the book, which proved to be McGuffey's primer.

No sooner had she handed the book to Pennix than Mrs. Billings came into the room, and Pennix picked up his hat, mumbled a good-by, and started for home. On the way he thought of Cora and all she had said. He looked at the little cloth-covered book and the strange characters that formed its printed pages. "I am going to get an education," he thought, again and again.

It was Cora, this little girl, who first determined the boy to secure an education. The child of the Colonel had taken his hand in hers and inspired him with higher ideals than he had ever known. Within that log-cabin he saw the superiority of heredity, the superiority of mind over matter, of culture over environment.

With Cora as his monitor and guide Pennix secretly resolved to get an education.

Since those days, dim and distant, Pennix has traveled far and wide, over land and sea; he has been in palaces and huts; among rulers and their subjects; with the poor and rich; the learned and the ignorant; but he has never met Cora's equal. All her many little charms came back to Pennix again and again to haunt but not to beckon. Freely, gladly would he have parted with any honor that had been bestowed on him in after years, or any worldly success that had fallen to him, for a day of childhood's innocent association with his child sweetheart. But the memory of her was ever present to him, and survived all the trials of the passing years,

until at length, a young man, Pennix determined to visit the haunts of his childhood to find her, but she had gone. Some thought she had gone to St. Louis, others thought the family had moved back to Tennessee. Pennix went to St. Louis, but his search proved vain. Disappointed, soul-sick and weary, he at length abandoned his search and returned to the plains of the West.

What became of the Colonel and his family is not known, but probably he went back to his lost estate in Tennessee. He had staked all on the Confederacy and lost all. No; not all. He saved his honor and his family, and it is just such men as he that the American people delight to honor; men who make no compromise with wrong, but infuse their undertakings with the enthusiasm of their own ardent nature.

But Cora! Oh, the pathos of a haunting, silent presence! Cora, his inspiration and morning star! He called her name, but all was silence, grim and pitiless.

When Pennix reached home after that first memorable visit to the Pill Cabin he showed the primer to his mother and informed her that he was going "to get an education." This new departure pleased her and amused his brothers and sisters. He was asked why he wanted to get an education.

"So that I can marry Cora," he replied.

He took the primer with him wherever he went, even to the pond where the family washing was done and where he was expected to dip up the water, pick up the wood, and keep the fire going under the

big black kettle. Cora must be won; "an education" was the only road that promised success. At night the little book lay under his pillow and during the day was his constant companion. Some laughed at Pennix, but what were taunts and cajoling when she approved. A child's love is as potent as a man's, and it is without selfishness, pure, divine.

Throughout that summer and the succeeding autumn Pennix was always ready and willing to make a trip to the Pill Cabin. No summer day was too hot, the hills never too steep, or the distance too far, or the load too heavy, or obstacles too great for this pleasurable undertaking. He was always ready to carry a basket of apples, a pail of milk, or a roll of butter to the Colonel's family, and many bunches of sour sorrel and flowers would he pick up by the roadside for "his Cora." While at home he considered it a great task to carry in a load of wood from the woodshed or a bucket of water from the spring or butter and milk from the old stone spring-house, it was an easy matter to carry a half dozen long stalks of sugar cane a distance of two miles up hills and through valleys to the Colonel's. And what a pleasure it was to peel the cane and cut the pulp into pieces just the right size for Cora's little mouth! Then, after eating the lumps of brown sugar which Pennix had slipped into his pocket before leaving home, they would take up their lessons together and recite to each other.

Of course the little girl was much the better reader, and Pennix would not know half of the words; but Cora would correct him in such a way

that he thought that he did splendidly, and when she read to him she never made a mistake.

One bright May morning, while Cora's mother was talking to Pennix's mother, the two children were playing in the yard at Pennix's home, when a little yellow bird lit on the twig of a cedar tree directly above their heads and began to sing as if its little heart was bursting with joy.

Pennix picked up a rock and hurled it at the little songster, and an instant later the little creature lay at their feet.

"Oh, Pennix!" Cora cried, bursting into tears, "you have killed that little bird; you are a bad, naughty boy, and I do not love you any more."

She refused to have anything more to do with him; his excuse, which so often went with others, "I did not go to do it," would not satisfy Cora, who left him and went weeping into the house.

Pennix went off to himself and wept bitterly. He was naturally affectionate and usually tender-hearted. To know that he had taken the life of an innocent bird that was singing for them both was a cause for genuine regret, but to excite the displeasure and to lose the confidence of his friend was more than he seemed able to bear. There was no hope, no consolation for him now. The one of all the earth was lost! and nothing now remained for him to do but die. He meditated suicide, but could not think of an easy way to do it. He then decided to run off. Perhaps when he came back, if he ever did, Cora would be glad to see him and take him back again. She would be sorry for what she had said

and would weep for his return. She would miss him when he had gone, and when she said her prayers at night she would think of him and pray for his safe return. Then he remembered that she had said she prayed for him every night; when he was absent, he thought, she would pray and weep! But—would she? What would she think of him when told he had run away? Yes; nothing else remained but to flee into the depths of the woods and hide away in the forest.

Acting out his resolution, Pennix started for the woods. He passed around the house, back of the smoke-house, through the little lane, and was turning the corner of the upper garden, when a call claimed his attention and changed his direction. It was the voice of his father, who was working in the garden and who now called to him, "Come in here and pull the weeds out of the onion patch!"

Forthwith he commenced pulling weeds, forgetful of his intention to run away; but he watched the kitchen door to see when Cora would come out. He knew that she and her mother would start home very soon and would pass by the garden; then he would "light" into the weeds with both hands and pretend that he did not see her. Presently they came out of the kitchen door and started up the hill. Pennix pulled his straw hat down over his forehead and pulled the weeds with both hands, never raising his head, but he kept his eye on the two all the time. They were talking as they passed by him, and when Pennix heard his name mentioned he listened with intense eagerness, but he could not hear what they

said. He was angry with himself because Cora did not wave her hand to him. He had mastered himself to show her how indifferent he was, but no sooner was Cora out of sight than he relented and was sorry that he did not speak to her.

There was a reconciliation afterward, but Cora was the Napoleon of the surrender, and her terms were that Pennix should never kill another bird through sheer wantonness and wickedness. Pennix has held that treaty sacred from that day to this, not only observing his agreement with her, but he has at all times sought to protect the winged inhabitants of the forest. Soon after this her family moved away from the Pill Cabin and disappeared from the neighborhood.

CHAPTER III

UP to this time Pen Pennix had enjoyed a wider scope of liberty than is usually accorded a boy of his age. Being the youngest one in the family the flattery and attention that he received naturally caused him to become somewhat proud, imperious, and dogmatic in his treatment of those whom he looked upon as his inferiors.

Pennix's life thus ran smoothly on until spring, when he entered into a new experience. A strange woman was seen coming down the lane one May morning riding a large, bony, sorrel horse. Dismounting and tying her steed to the yard fence and throwing her long riding-skirt over the pommel of the saddle, she started up the gravel walk toward the house, the gravel churning harshly under her hurried tread. Up the steps, two at a time, she went, and entered the house without as much as a knock of warning. Pennix and his brother John hurried in after her to see who this important person was, where she came from, what she wanted, and what was the cause of her hurry and excitement. On entering the room, Pennix took up his position near the door, whence he could observe her carefully.

She was a large, bony, angular woman of about forty years of age, positive, vindictive, and loud in

conversation; her shoulders were broad but somewhat stooped, her hands were large and coarse, and bore signs of toil. Her eyes were small and black, having a fierce expression in them; her face was swarthy and freckled, and the chin and jaws were covered with a light growth of fuzzy beard.

She pushed her bonnet well back over her net and stood with her riding switch in her hand, and kept whipping the side of her dress.

"I am getting up a school," she said, "and I want to know, Uncle Ben, how many you'll send and how much you'll give toward having a good school in the neighborhood? Bud Greenlee has three, two gals and a boy, which he is goin' to send. Andy Jones says he will send hisn when he can spare 'em from hum, and 'Aunt Patsy' wants Joe to go, but Joe is taken so to huntin' and fishin' and swim'n' that she is afeared that he has no hanker'n' after books and larnin'. George Jones says he will send Tobus and Willis just as soon as the crop is laid by, and Bill Haggard says he will send all hisn—he has five gals and two boys—if he has any luck in the 'diggin's' so he can pay their schoolin'. Noah Fitts Waters wants Sallie to go, but Sallie has the boys and courtin' on her brain an' says she won't go unless her big brother Tim goes too. I didn't see Tim, but as he reads the papers and says verses at Sunday-school, what shows a thirst after larnin', I suppose him and Sally will come. Ike Daily says he will send his brats and Janey Daily says she will see that they come if she has to whip them to school every mornin'. Priscilla Harmon expects to come

if they don't start a school up the creek, what they are talking of doin' now, since I hev started in to get up a school in our neck of the woods. I would like for Priscilla to come, as she is such a good gal and Christian-like, and c'u'd help me with the little brats and run things afore I got there mornings. Now them Billingers hev gone I can hev the Pill Cabin for it, and by fixin' in a seat or two it will do purty good for a summer school. It'd be too cold winters, you know. I want to start first Monday in June, and as you believe in education you'll do your part for the trainin' of your boys."

Now, if there was anything that appeared "good for the training of the boys," Pennix's father would subscribe to it, as she knew. It was that last sentence of her announcement that won the day for her. Pennix noticed, though, that his parents hesitated, especially his mother, who plainly saw that this woman, Ann Cupboard, "the weaver," should stay with her loom and continue to card and spin flax, cotton and wool, and not undertake to train the youthful mind. As she stood whipping the skirts of her dress, she was invited to sit down, but she declined, and neither would she remove her bonnet. Pennix circled around, in order to beg his parents not to send him to her school, when an unusual flurry of the switch and dress arrested his advance. He stopped and looked her full in the face; her low, wide forehead, her jerky motions and speech, her freckled face, and her large mouth full of "snags" gave her a very strange and uninviting appearance. She looked at Pennix and Pennix

looked at her, but apart from this look she paid no attention to the children.

"What are your terms and how long do you propose to teach?" Pennix's father asked.

"One dollar per month," was Miss Cupboard's quick reply, "and as I need some money to start in on I would like you to pay it now. Some can't pay it now, and with them I will hev to wait; but you can."

Pennix's father handed her over a paper bill, and said that he would pay the balance before the school was out.

Then, assuring the parents that she would keep good order and that she believed like Solomon, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," she hurried away.

Pennix and his brother John stood on the porch and watched Miss Ann Cupboard, the weaving-school-teacher, as she rode out of sight. After a while John said:

"It begins in June; I don't want to go, but I would like to go up the creek."

"Yes," said Pennix, "and she said something about 'spare the rod and spoil the child.' What did she mean by that?"

"She meant she will lick you if you don't obey the rules and get your lessons. You been wanting to 'get an education'; now you got a chance to do it."

"I wonder if she will whip worse than pa?" mused Pennix.

"I don't think pa is in it when it comes to

whipp'n'," was John's comfortless reply; for if there was anything calculated to make the cold chills play hide and seek, up and down, over and across the small of the back and along Pennix's spinal column, it was the thought of a whipping "worse than father's!"

Well, the "first Monday in June" came only too soon, when Pennix, his sister Laura, and his brother John, with "clean hands and clean faces," started up the hill for the Pill Cabin.

Pennix was provided with a McGuffey's second reader and the old Noah Webster blue-back spelling-book. This was Pennix's first school, and at the Pill Cabin—oh, the irony of Fate!

The trip was made in silence, as all three children were in a rebellious mood. Pennix was thinking of the many times he had traveled that road before, and he wished that his Cora could be there too so they could get "an education" together.

At length the old cabin in the field was reached, and there they found a half-dozen barefoot boys and girls standing around watching one another and on the lookout for the teacher. Presently she came, and here let the remark be made, parenthetically, that she was very different from the present rosebud school mistress. The children took a few squints at her and then hurried to their seats, where all remained immovable. Miss Cupboard came in, tossed her bonnet upon an old shelf, looked up the chimney, gave a few snuffs around the fireplace, and then turned around and faced her victims. But no sooner did she see Pennix sitting on the "girls' side" than

she lifted him out and led him to a seat in the "boys' side."

"You stay there," she said.

Pennix stayed.

She then took a roll of foolscap paper from the folds of her homespun linen dress, and, after rapping for "order," began to read her "rules." She read them twice a day throughout her term, at nine in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Pennix learned them by heart, and it was about all that he did learn. If there was anything that he did want to know it was these rules, because the slightest infringement thereof meant a whipping "worse than father's." These were the iron-clad rules, and however crude and ridiculous they may appear, they governed Pennix's efforts at school.

SCHOOL RULES.

RULE 1.

The boys will sit on the south side of the Pill Cabin and the girls on the other.

RULE 2.

The boys and girls will not play together.

RULE 3.

The boys will play on the south side of the Pill and the girls on the other.

RULE 4.

There will be no whispering, tittering or giggling in school.

RULE 5.

No boy will leave the clearing around the south side of the Pill Cabin unless sent after a pail of water.

RULE 6.

When a girl wants to leave the clearing around the other side of the Pill Cabin she must come and ask me.

RULE 7.

No boy or girl will leave the Pill Cabin at the same time and no two will be in the clearing at the same time and not more than once a day during books.

RULE 8.

Every boy and girl must keep his eye on their books.

RULE 9.

There will be no swearing or fighting about the Pill Cabin or on the road to home.

RULE 10.

You must not soil or tear your clothes and books or spill the ink.

RULE 11.

Do as little scratching as you can git along with and do not git in the seed tick grass on the way to school.

RULE 12.

I will knock on the door for books and you must come right in.

RULE 13.

Solomon the wise man says spare the rod and spoil the child and I believe that way too.

RULE 14.

There will be no mumble peg or marbles for keeps played around the Pill Cabin and any boy what strikes another on the shin when playing shinny will loose his recess.

RULE 15.

Any boy what uses tobacker or if tobacker is found in his pocket or girl what uses snuff or if snuff is found in her pocket will be switched on the spot.

RULE 16.

A girl or boy what comes late to school will git no recess and just half a noon.

RULE 17.

If I am late the oldest girl will take up books till I come and you mind her just as you do me or I will switch you when I come.

RULE 18.

Keep out of the others dinner buckets nor git crumbs and molasses on the seats. Don't grease the benches or hands and faces with your meat. Don't throw bacon rinds on the floor but take them back home for the dogs and cats to eat. Don't eat like a pig but keep your mouth shut as you eat.

RULE 19.

Wash before you start to school but don't put grease on your hair to make it slick.

RULE 20.

Any boy or girl what goes to sleep in time of books will git a gourd of water in his face.

RULE 21.

Don't put your hands on my hour glass or meddle with anything on my table.

RULE 22.

Don't slam your books down but hold them in your hands.

RULE 23.

There will be no shootin' of wads or eatin' in time of books.

RULE 24.

Any boy or girl what makes faces at me or at each other will git no recess and only half a noon.

RULE 25.

Any boy or girl what don't obey these rules or who sasses me will be switched.

After reading these rules she proceeded to business. First she brought up two little urchins and made them go down the alphabet from A to Z, and then she took the back track and went from Z to A. After making two round trips she sent them back to their seats with the injunction, "Study your lesson."

Then she called for the class in the first reader,

and those who had that book moved slowly to her table. On looking over the room to see if there were any others who in her judgment should be in this class, she saw Pennix and ordered him to come and say his lesson. "But I am in the second reader," he informed her. "No, you are not," she said. "You've never been to school a day in your life. Come at once."

Though not a timid child, Pennix obeyed this call with fear and trembling. She pointed out a certain crack in the floor, and, directing the class to "toe that line," arranged the class according to their size and sex. Pennix always remembered that row of bare feet; none were of immaculate whiteness, some were actually rusty; one had a red toe, another had a boil or a stone bruise on the side of his foot, while still another had a double toe that looked like a crawfish, and the boys afterward nicknamed him "Crawfish."

Sally Bacon began the lesson, but after mumbling and stumbling over a few words she was interrupted by the teacher. "Stop that way of readin'! You read like your mouth was full of hot mush." Sally stopped.

The next one in the line was little Pearl Crabtree, who was a smart little girl, and began to rattle off her words like falling hail in Kansas; but she was soon called down by the teacher. "Stop there; that is a period," she exclaimed.

Pearl stopped until she was given permission to start again.

The next one, Billy Haggard, did not know his

letters, and when the teacher told him to read, he could only look up and smile.

"Go on," she said, but Billy did not budge. She then tested Billy by himself and, in some mysterious way, found out that Billy did not know his letters.

At this she was mad.

She put him in the a-b-c class, with the remark, "You look purty trying to read in the first reader when you don't know your letters."

Pennix's turn now came, and he started in where Billy had stumbled. He began to read, "A small horse is called a pony—" but no sooner had he pronounced the word "horse" than the teacher interrupted him. "Stop," she roared; "don't call that 'hoss' like a nigger! Call it harse."

Giving the word "horse" a spiral twist up through the winding labyrinths of his nose, Pennix read on without interruption. "Nuff," she said presently.

It was Miss Cupboard's system of pedagogy so to divide the lesson among the members of the class that each would read a few lines before the lesson was read through, as the lesson was gone over but once. Mary Snow came next, and when she commenced to cry she was sent to her seat with the information that she was a "cry-baby." Buck Thomas, "Skinny" Flint, Sissy and Bee Bacon pulled through, and then the class was dismissed one at a time. Once, during the recitation, a toe, a little red toe, got off the crack, but it got back again in time to escape the switch that struck where the toe had trespassed.

Other classes were called, but Pennix was too intent on observing "Rule 8" to note or remember how they got through. When his brother John was called, he was directed to take off his shoes, as he made too much noise walking across the room with them on. His sister Laura was accused of having greased her hair against the express provisions of "Rule 19."

Recess came, and the boys filed out first and went to the "south side of the Pill Cabin." The girls then followed and went to the "north side of the Pill Cabin." Pennix and his playmates wandered around through the dog-fennel which had taken possession of the old field, when unexpectedly a loud voice was heard, "Books, books!"

A hammering on the door and window followed, and more calls for "Books!"

The next session was precisely like the preceding one, then noon came and the boys and girls had a whole hour to wander around in the dog-fennel beneath a June sun and a cloudless sky.

Next morning there was a scene in the home kitchen about the time that "Rule 19" was being obeyed. Pennix's sister Laura declared up and down that she would not go back to school, and to add force and effect to this declaration she said that she "*would take a whippin' first.*"

Her wishes in the matter were granted, and she was sent to school "up the creek."

Pennix then declared that *he* would not go back to school, and that *he* "*would take a whippin' first.*" Well, he got the whippin' "first" and went back to

school second. His brother John then saw that the jig was up and made no protest.

Throughout the months of June, July, and August Pennix and his brother John made their daily pilgrimage to the Pill Cabin. The weather was usually hot, and "seed ticks," yearling ticks, and adult ticks, in their turn and season, infested the path over which they traveled; while snakes, lizards, and scorpions had to be looked for and anticipated, lest they bury their poisonous fangs in bare feet. Oftentimes in school the boys and girls had to wage war against the festive ticks, which held forbidden carnival, and "Rule 11" was little observed during the early part of the morning session. The violation of "Rule 11" greatly annoyed the teacher, but as she rode the old sorrel horse to school she escaped these pests, or possibly she was proof against them. Pennix would not do the old maid an injustice, but he does not hesitate to say that no sensible tick, one that placed a value on its own life and standing among its fellows, would ever be so reckless as to attack her. It would get the worst of it every time.

The Pill Cabin was an isolated place, reached by unfrequented paths and cow-trails; well-traveled roads and bottoms are free from these insects, which live in a certain grass that grows on the ridges.

Looking back through the fog of the past, it seems strange that school was held at such a place; and stranger still that the children should have been required to remain in that dog-fennel field while within a hundred yards of the cabin were beautiful forests, springs, bluffs and waterfalls, where birds

were singing and flowers were in bloom, and cool shadows were in such striking contrast to the heat, the dazzling light, and strong odor arising from that dog-fennel field.

Pennix's dislike for the school and the mistress became more and more pronounced day by day, until his feelings were bitterness and suppressed rebellion. He knew and observed her every rule, particularly "Rule 8," as she seemed to adhere most cruelly to this rule. Pennix would "keep his eye on his book," but would not study a letter, syllable, or word. She finally found this out, and to frustrate her plans further and to escape the ever-present switch he would move his lips as if in study. She was determined to make him "learn," and Pennix was equally determined that he would not. His intention to "get an education" had withered like a flower planted in the sands of the desert.

One Friday afternoon the school mistress said, "You will all learn speeches. Git them out of your books and have them ready to say when I am ready." She then wrote several notes to the patrons reminding them that tuition was due for the first month's schooling.

Presently Pennix was called on to say his speech. "I hain't got none," he said. He got the switch and a lecture, which did not hurt; that is, the lecture did not hurt.

"Now," said she, "you have that piece ready when I ask you again."

Pennix, when he got through wiping his weeping eyes, opened the old spelling-book and saw two lines

which seemed to fit the case. So when he was called on again he stepped out, and made a bow.

"Ann can spin flax, a shad can swim," he recited.

As Ann was the teacher's name, and she had run a flax loom and was a good spinner, the sentiment expressed and the comparison implied were timely and to the point. She did not smile; she never did; neither did any one smile on her, but Pennix smiled.

The last day of school came, and then Pennix went back to his old freedom. Ann never kept school again, but stayed with her loom. Fortunately for the young, the old teachers of her type are things of the past; they live only in the chronicles of the historian and in the memory of men who have passed the meridian of life. Yet these teachers did their best, and they saw the right in the light of their time and its customs and superstitions. They had many rude virtues, even though they looked upon the young as imps of his Satanic majesty.

Pennix's sister Laura went to school "up the creek," and when the last day came Pennix was induced, after many days' coaxing and a little bribery, to risk a day up there, providing he would not be required to "say any lessons."

A young lady by the name of Miss Anthony taught the school "up the creek," and while all the children loved her, some of the patrons believed that her code of ethics was so contrary to Solomon's that she was unfit to teach school.

When Pennix went into the schoolhouse that morning, all dressed in his best suit of blue-jean clothes, the teacher, who was a little rosebud of a

school ma'am, and fresh from a sectarian college, took him in her lap, kissed his fair rosy cheeks, and asked him if he would say a piece for her that day.

"Yes, ma'am, if I had a piece to learn; but I did not bring my book."

Presently she handed Pennix a little book that was full of pretty little speeches, and after a while the time came for Pennix to speak. He had memorized that dear, familiar poem beginning:

"Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are;
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky."

After Pennix had spoken his piece, Miss Anthony came around and said that he could keep the book that contained this poem.

The school "up the creek" seemed to Pennix an earthly paradise. The boys and girls played together, and were permitted to wade in the water where the creek was shallow, and the teacher even joined in the plays. When "books" were called she rang a bell, and Pennix thought at first that the calves had got out or the "bell-wether" had jumped out of the adjoining field; but the children informed him that their teacher rang a bell when she took up school, and that was for them to go in.

The dinner was spread on the banks of a beautiful stream, under the foliage of a large elm tree. The teacher had provided the dinner instead of "a treat," and a great treat it was. The round, yellow apples, which had no core, were so delicious and juicy, and the long store pawpaws had a different

flavor but were as good as the woods' pawpaws. There were chickens cooked brown; cakes with layers of jelly between; pies of different kinds; store candy, raisins and lemonade, and many other strange and dainty things to eat. After the white homespun table cloths were spread upon the blue grass and the "goodies" were placed around, the teacher and children, with uncovered heads and up-turned faces, repeated the Lord's Prayer in unison. For an hour or two after dinner the children were allowed to play, and then the bell rang and all ran in to say good-by to the teacher. She then made a speech like a Sunday-school teacher, and after kissing all the children they took up their line of march homeward, and the last day of school "up the creek" was only a sweet memory in their hearts.

CHAPTER IV

SOON after the close of the school "up the creek," Pennix and the other members of the family were made happy by the arrival of "Sister Mary" from Illinois. Several years before she had gone to Illinois on a visit, and she had married there. Pennix had heard that she "had married rich," and he wondered if her wealth had "turned her head." She was met at the far-away railroad town and driven home in a spring wagon, which was the best conveyance then known in that part of the country. She came in on schedule time, bringing rich gifts to all. Pennix's little Barlow knife was a real treasure, while the white handkerchief with a big letter P worked on its border was entirely too dainty and clean to use.

Her winning smile, her merry laugh and gentle manners were the same as when, in years past, she had carried the milk pails in the gray of the morning and the dusk of the evening, or "done out the washing" at the pond, peeled apples in the orchard and put them on the "scaffold" to dry in the sun, or "boiled down" cane juice into sorghum or maple sap into syrup and sugar.

After a few weeks' visit, a part of which time she spent in the woods romping like a girl or riding through valleys and over hills, she and her little son, about five years of age, prepared to return to their

Illinois home, and Pennix and John had to accompany them to the station on the "Frisco" railroad. Old Rose and Jenny, the riding-mules, were saddled, a woman's saddle being put on old Rose and a boy's saddle on Jenny. Pennix rode behind on old Rose, and John and his little nephew rode Jenny. They started for the station, some eighteen miles by the Reeves ford or twelve miles by the Huse ford. As a heavy rain had fallen the night before it was deemed prudent to go by the way of the Huse ford, because it was wide and shallow, while the other was narrow and deep. The Meramec river showed signs of rising quite rapidly, and even when they crossed the water came up on the sides of the mules. They met Rube Harmon at the edge of the river. Rube was a noted swimmer, and, to reassure them, he re-crossed the river, and declared that if any one fell off he would rescue him without fail. The railroad station was reached in safety, the packs got started, and the boys hurried back, taking the "nigh cut," intending to cross the river at the Huse ford.

On reaching the banks of the Meramec they found that the heavy rains along its headwaters had raised it "out of its banks," and that it was now both wide and deep, the water line extending far out in the timber on both sides. They hesitated, and did not know just what to do as they looked at the turbid stream full of floating logs, trees, rails, and stumps, but their hesitation was only momentary.

"We have got to go home and the Reeves ford is out of its banks, too, and we can't reach it be-

fore dark; old Rose and Jenny are good swimmers, and if you will follow we will cross," said John. Of course Pennix agreed to follow—wherever his brother John led he would follow; he never failed in this respect in his life. John was nearly three years older, but many years wiser, and Pennix had implicit faith in him.

"Give her the bridle rein, and if a tree knocks you off, grab her tail and hold on," John instructed, spurring Jenny into the river. Jenny was soon swimming.

Pennix was riding a side saddle, so, putting his legs between the horns of the saddle, he followed. As old Rose was a much taller mule than Jenny, she was able to wade farther into the stream; but very soon Pennix could tell by the easy, gliding motion that she, too, was swimming. Jenny was about fifty feet ahead of old Rose, and Pennix saw that Jenny was borne down stream by the strong current.

Now the boys knew that about half a mile below the ford was a high perpendicular wall of rock, and unless they effected a landing above that bluff they would have to go down the river with the current for at least a mile before a landing could be made. As the river along the bluff was narrow and swift, and the stream contained a great deal of drift-wood, the situation was one of threatening danger. Everything now depended on the mules. If they were able to stem the tide all would be well, but if they failed— On, on they swam toward the opposite bank, but with a considerable drift down stream.

The mules seemed to realize the danger or unpleasant situation even more than their young riders. Old Rose had the reins, and she would frequently groan and brace up against the current, and even try to head in above the ford.

Every now and then a tree or stump or log or rail would pass in front or behind the mules, but they seemed to know how to gauge their speed so as to miss them. At times old Rose would swim up stream or struggle with the current while a log would pass in front of her, or she would increase her speed in order to escape an object in her rear, and in that way avoid collision.

Suddenly John rose in his saddle.

"Grab the reins!" he yelled. "Turn back! Big tree with limbs comin'!"

Pennix took hold of the reins, which hung loose over the horns of the saddle, and rounded for the other shore. John circled his mule and started back toward Pennix just in time to escape a limby old oak which at that instant was upon them. As it was, Jenny struck one of the limbs, which was under water, and made a lunge and plunge, but regained her position as soon as her feet were free from the entanglement beneath the surface of the water. While Jenny was making this struggle, John turned in his saddle a second time.

"Turn!" he yelled. "Head down stream and for the other bank!"

But it was not necessary to obey this supplemental order, as Pennix had quickly obeyed the first and had rounded the circle, and in another moment the

tree went sweeping by at a safe distance. The two mules now were again headed for the shore, and were near it. After swimming a short distance they struck bottom and the timber line, about 100 yards below the ford, thus making a swim of not less than 300 yards. But all the danger had not been passed. There were logs and rails lodged among the trees, and hidden beneath the water, which was yet of irregular and uncertain depths. The mules would sometimes plunge into a hole and have to do some more swimming to get out. Again, they would stumble over logs and rails that were pinned in between standing trees. But by slow stages and great care they felt their way through the obstruction and reached solid land and home in safety.

Pennix never forgot this swim across the Mera-mec on the hurricane deck of a mule. The evening shadows had already cast their darkening mantle over the river bottom, and everybody knows what these evening shadows are like. Nor did he forget the coolness displayed by his brother, both in shunning the tree himself and in directing Pennix how to keep out of its way. It was the loop that Pennix made and the retrograde movement John made that saved the two boys from watery graves.

Well, the autumn glided into winter, and when the "swimming holes" were covered with an icy sheet, the storms held high carnival, and the winter winds roared in their forest home, Pennix and his brothers Ben and John were notified to get ready for the school that would open the next week.

A new district had been organized "down the creek," and it was to be known as the "Harmon School," probably because it had been organized through the efforts of an old pioneer by the name of John Harmon, and the schoolhouse was located near his plantation. School was to begin on the first Monday in December and continue for three months, which was considered a long term. It was a "free school"; that is, the parents did not have to pay tuition. All could attend, the rich and poor, the old and young, the good and bad. The only line drawn was "the color line."

This was the first free school in that part of the country, nor was the "free" part restricted to those who were so fortunate as to live in the "district." By special arrangement the teacher was required to teach all who might attend, and to compensate his services properly he was to be paid the then magnificent sum of thirty-five dollars per month, and he was to "board round."

The organization of this free school was considered a great event, and gave the neighborhood a name that reached to other sections of the State and marked an epoch in the education of the young. Pennix was pleased with the idea of going to school, as he still wanted to "get an education." His last experience with the school "up the creek" had taken all the bitterness and prejudice against schools out of his head.

On the morning of the first Monday in December Pennix and his brothers Ben and John started for

school before daylight. They had to walk about two miles, and as they wanted to get benches near the fire, they went early. But they were none too early, for the seats were being filled up when they got there, and they reached the schoolhouse at the "break of day."

Pennix's educational equipment now consisted of a brand-new third reader, the blue-back spelling book, a slate and slate pencil, a Barlow knife, a yarn ball and a "paddle," as a ball bat was then called.

The schoolhouse was a large log structure, about forty by thirty feet, with two rows of long benches on the sides, and a smooth sloping plank fastened along the walls to write upon. Two logs had been sawed out, and six windows, about twenty by twenty-four inches, had been put in to admit the light. About six feet of the back end of the building was occupied by a fireplace, which in some way converged into a small stick chimney on the outside of the building. The building was located on an eminence and in the midst of a forest, with open fields and meadows in the valley near by.

By good daylight a great fire roared in the fireplace, and a happy group of children stood in the glare of the fire. The scholars kept arriving one by one and in groups, until it looked like a camp-meeting. Finally the teacher arrived, and no ruler or potentate could have been shown more deference or looked up to with greater fear and respect. His name was Noah Bartlett, and he came well recommended from a place called "Boston." According

to Pennix's best recollection, he was looked upon as one of the wise men from the East. As he could do all the sums in Ray's Third Part Arithmetic, read and pronounce all the words in McGuffey's fifth reader, and spell all the words in the blue-backed spelling book, he certainly was far in advance of anything that Pennix had encountered up to that time in the line of teachers. Moreover, his great erudition was sister to a gentleness of manner, a dignity not unlike a Chesterfield, supplemented with the suavity of a Henry Clay. Besides, he wore "store clothes" and a "biled shirt," which raiment greatly enhanced his prestige in the neighborhood. He was quite as eager to teach the scholars gentle manners and good morals, which they no doubt stood in need of, as "book learnin'," and sought in many ways to cultivate pleasant relations with the patrons, and thus make his a model school in etiquette and good will.

Noah Bartlett was a Yankee, pure and simple, which fact, with Yankee prudence, he was in no hurry to proclaim from the house-tops. Rather did he prefer to establish himself firmly in the confidence of the citizens first. He showed by his works and his life what a respectable man a Yankee could be; he proved that Yankees did not have horns, as had been alleged; that they worshiped the same God, spoke the same language, and spoke it in essentially the same way, and thus in a marked degree he soothed the prejudice, if any existed, against the people in the East. He taught his scholars to say "thank you" whenever a courtesy, however

small or great, was bestowed, and at the time of dismissal, at 4 P. M., he would station himself in the center of the school-room and require each pupil to bow or "drop a curtsy" as the scholars passed out single file, and repeat the bow next morning if school was in session. When a patron visited the school, which was a rare occurrence, he required the entire school to rise and bow to the visitor. He would then conduct the visitor to the "visitors' bench," and as soon as the guest was seated the whole school would rise as a single man and sing that beautiful song, "Oh, why don't they visit this school?" In the second stanza of that song something is said about "clean hands and clean faces," a condition which was never verified by the hands and faces of those who sang the song. There was a little boy, Jakey Sykes, who always sang the song with great vim and much pleasure, but his hair was disheveled, his hands chapped, his face stained with smut, and his mouth bore evidences of breakfast bacon.

Pennix was always glad when the teacher went home with him; his visits were many, and they increased in frequency as the school drew toward the close. Whether or not the fact that Pennix's cousin, Lou Johnson, an estimable and talented young lady spending the winter with the family, had anything to do with the teacher's frequent visits is a question foreign to the subject in hand. Pennix's father and the teacher would talk late into the night, while Pennix was given the reins of entire liberty. Another advantage arising from these visits was a

pronounced improvement in the bill of fare, which, when the teacher came, would become like the grand opening of a new restaurant.

Pennix made good progress in reading, writing, and spelling, but, strange to relate, he had advanced in the spelling-book to the word "republican" before it dawned on his mind that the words which he was learning in the blue-back spelling book had a meaning, and were not the dead conglomeration of signs and sounds that they appeared to be, but were the words used in talking, reading, and writing. Pennix was studying his lesson one night at home when, coming to the word "republican," he asked his cousin Lou if that meant a man they called a "republican"? She explained the meaning of the word and all the other words in the lesson, and from that day words, just "words," took on a new life and interest. This was the first real school that Pennix attended, and it gave him a peep into "the great, wide, wonderful world." Many funny things occurred during the continuance of this school, and among them he remembers these two occurrences.

It was the custom of the children, as they arrived in the school-room, to gather around the open fireplace until they were thoroughly dried out, if wet, or warmed up, if cold; but they always yielded the warmest place, directly in front of the fire, to the latest arrival. Almost every morning all the scholars with books in hand would collect around the fireplace, and some would stay there all day unless they were sent to their seats by the teacher or by

some scholar whose size or influence gave him authority.

One cold morning, when the wind blew loud and shrill and the snow fell thick and fast, there came into the school-room two little girls who were cold and damp from their long walk through the snow-storm. They presented themselves for a position at the center of the fireplace, a position which was held by the East brothers, who would not yield the place to the little girls. Pennix's big brother Ben gave the East brothers a jerk, followed by a kick, and started them to their seats. As the smallest one of the boys passed Pennix, the latter gave him a kick too. But the teacher happened to hear the fuss and turned his head in time to take in the situation. He then told Pennix to "go and get a switch," which order Pennix obeyed very reluctantly. After a careful search Pennix found what he was looking for. It was an old, dead brush pile, half hidden in the snow, and, picking out a long, slender water oak twig, which appeared tough and sound, but was brittle and easily broken, he started leisurely back toward the schoolhouse. On reaching the door steps, he made a great ado sweeping the snow off his feet and talking in different tones of voice—low, loud, fine, and shrill, as if there were many visitors of different ages and kinds at the door. Then he gave a loud knock on the door, and heard the order "All to your seats," followed by a stampede that told that Mr. Noah Bartlett's order had been obeyed. The teacher hastened from his high desk in the corner, and with a hop, skip, and jump move-

ment he came to the door and flung it wide open! Pennix stepped inside as the school arose to bid the visitors welcome. Then pandemonium reigned for a minute! Some of the scholars saw their mistake while in the very act of bowing to the visitor; others made the bow, while a few kept on bowing. Some laughed and others shouted, and a few, in the more obscure parts of the house, who had not been well trained, began to sing "Oh, why don't they visit this school?" Little Jakey Sykes sang the first stanza clear through before he stopped.

The teacher seized Pennix by the coat collar and led him in front of the school. He took forcible hold of the switch, which Pennix readily let go for fear it would break, and turning to the school, said:

"Before I punish a scholar I always make a talk to the school, showing the nature and extent of the offense, that you may never do the same thing. Pennix has made a great disturbance by breaking your study and fooling the school. We thought some visitors were coming and some of you began to sing that song that is sung only to visitors. We were disappointed. Some of you were studying and reading your lessons and lost your place, and will have to go all over them again before you can find it. I didn't care so much about you making the bow, as that is so much more training, but I did not want you to bow to Pennix. Of course I have nothing against Pennix, who is a smart but sometimes a bad boy. The Good Book says, 'As you sow, so must you reap.' If you sow trouble you must reap trouble. If you sow seeds of goodness

you will reap the good things of life and inherit life everlasting. Pennix must know and you must know that these ways that I have to receive visitors are not for him or for you, and I want all of the school to take warning by this whipping what to expect when they run up against the teacher."

He then turned to Pennix, and saying something about Pennix thanking him (which Pennix never did) the longest day he lived for this training of "the youthful twig," he squared himself for business. His arm rose and fell, but what became of the stick? It was strewn in pieces over the school-room.

After shaking Pennix until he thought his head was a whip-cracker, Mr. Bartlett asked:

"Will you ever do that again?"

After Pennix's head ceased its vibrations so he could talk he made the promise.

"Now go to your seat."

Pennix went, and soon the steady buzz and hum of the school told that they had found "the place." One by one they gathered again around the hearthstone, and the school was back in its normal condition.

In this school were two young people of more than ordinary merit. In fact, they would have been noticed and noticeable anywhere for their comeliness and intelligence. One was a young woman whose name was "Frank" Benson and the other was a young man by the name of Browning Harrison. They and Pennix traveled the same road to and from school for over a mile, as Browning lived

between Pennix's home and the school, and Frank lived across the valley from the Harrisons'.

In that day the young women and girls did up their hair in nets, and to say that a lady wore "a big net" was considered a great compliment, and of course the larger the net, the greater the compliment. Nature had, however, endowed Frank with the most luxuriant mass of black, glossy hair that Pennix had ever seen adorn the head of any girl or woman. It was as black as "a nigger's inside pocket" and so long that it would have been the envy of all latter-day Populists.

One day Frank and Browning were walking side by side on their way from school, oblivious of all others, and unconscious of the snowballs that went whizzing by this way and that.

The girl had pushed her bonnet well back over her net so as to better expose her beautiful gray eyes, lovely face, and radiant complexion, that Browning might look and admire, when suddenly a snowball, soaked in water, went dripping and humming from the right hand of Pennix, and struck her "net" broadside and at its base. Then—bonnet, net, strings, and hair rose and fell upon the ground, a promiscuous ruin!

"You ding little imp!" was all that Pennix heard as he sought safety in flight. But he was not swift enough for this splendid creature of the Ozarks. She grabbed him by his hair when he was running, and gave him a jerk that caused him to turn a back somersault. She washed his face with a mixture of gravel, snow, and sand—with more sand and

gravel than snow! Pennix pleaded for mercy and swore that "he did not go to do it," but she pounded him into the snow and sand, then twisted him up in a knot, straightened him out, then curled him into a loop, and was taking him to the creek when Pennix "possumed" to be dead. He gave a loud wail, then became limber and held his breath as long as he could. Then she relented, dropped him, walked back to the scene of the disaster, picked up all that was left of the net, hair, and bonnet, and resumed her place by the side of Browning with as much grace, poise, and self-possession as if nothing unusual had happened, while poor Pennix dragged his tired self along far to the rear, and felt as though he had the "blind staggers."

Frank was a typical girl; quick at repartee and full of wit and fun. One day Pennix undertook to quote her some Scripture by saying:

"The wise men came from the East, bringing rich gifts of *frankin-sence* and myrrh."

"Yes," she replied, "but they did not bring any *Pennix-no-sense* with them."

The last day of school came all too soon. The regular lessons were gone through with in the forenoon, but the afternoon was one long Fourth of July, with a spelling-school and an exhibition at night, an exhibition with "curtains." The spelling began at "early candle lighting." Pennix had thought to himself that he would get the prize, but when he spelled the word "sponge" "spunge," and the teacher said "next," he knew that the jig was up, and felt sad until Dink Payne spelled the word

"until" with two l's. Dink was the best singer in the school and also the most handsome boy, and his defeat afforded Pennix much comfort. One by one the long line was shortened until the contest narrowed down to Browning Harrison and Frank Benson.

Excitement now ran high; word after word was spelled correctly, when the word "daguerreotype" was given him. "D-a—" and Browning hesitated. Then, after a pause, he continued: "D-a-g-u-e-r-r-o-t-y-p-e." Without a moment's hesitation Frank spelled the word correctly amid the cheers of the school. Pennix even joined in, as he was on Frank's side. The teacher then presented a pretty book to Frank, *Æsop's Fables*, and the contest was ended.

The "exhibition" came next. It consisted of speeches by the small scholars, and dialogues, tragedy, comedy and melodrama by the better scholars. It was the greatest "hit" in the history of the neighborhood, and was the theme for conversation for months and even years afterward. An exhibition of that sort had never been given before, and to the young it was a revelation.

In after years Pennix saw the greatest military pageantries; visited the World's Fair and made revolutions by day and by night in the Ferris Wheel; saw the Grand Canyon of the Colorado where it was twenty miles from bank to bank, with the Colorado River winding like a silver thread at almost invisible depths; visited the top of Washington's Monument; saw every mountain peak in the West and

saw the Eastern Olympic slope radiant with sunshine, reflecting from their snow-clad heights the prismatic colors; trod the soil of the Montezumas and saw their ruins; saw the great battleships belching forth their dazzling flames, and great searchlights illuminating the sea within their zone, making it as bright as when beneath the noonday sun—but all these were as nothing compared to that school exhibition as it seemed to him then.

CHAPTER V

ONE of the most popular amusements of the country during the summer season was the swimming of the horses in the Meramec River. Pennix learned how to swim a horse even before he knew how to swim himself. He would often take one of the mules or horses to water or even out of the plow, and, when there was no father's eye to see, he would proceed to a deep hole in Brazil Creek, and swim back and forth across it, until the excitement was no longer a pleasure. It was also the custom of the country for the boys and young men to assemble at certain places on Saturday afternoons for the purpose of swimming their horses. They believed the animal enjoyed a swim just as much as their masters, and this was probably true, had not the swimming been carried to excess. The place where they usually collected was just above the Paine ford, where the water was deep and the river wide, and had a good bottom and banks. Pennix remembers that his big brother Ben would often take the great white horse George to the river, but George would not swim. He would lunge high into the air, and then sink down to the bottom and give another leap into the air, and again sink below the surface, and in this way would cross the river. He would often disappear beneath the water, Ben holding on to a

strap fastened around the horse's neck, and he would rise with the horse but float on the water while the horse would go on down to the bottom to get a new start. George was a magnificent horse; young, docile, of snowy whiteness, agile, of noble parts and matchless symmetry. When lunging from the water high into the air and blowing the water from his nostrils, with long white mane and floating tail, he seemed more like some monster of the nether seas than the gentle beast he was.

All the boys in the Ozarks learned to swim at an early age. Pennix was but eight years old when he learned the sport.

Even back in slavery days the negroes, boys and men, were given Saturday afternoons off to go swimming, or fishing, or hunting, or prepare for Sunday. Saturday afternoon was as strictly observed as a half holiday as Sunday was observed as the day of God. And that good old motto, "Saturday for recreation and Sunday for consecration," is yet observed in the land of the opossum and pawpaw, though less strictly than in the long ago.

"Learning to swim" was a very important event in the life of the boys of the Ozarks, and one of the very first questions one boy would ask of the other on first acquaintance was, "Can you swim?"

The boy who could not swim was looked upon as an inferior being and had to take a back seat, while the boy who could swim, dive, and float, tread water and swim on his back, had good credentials and was admitted to full fellowship wherever his lot might be cast.

One Saturday afternoon there was the usual gathering of boys and men and darkies above the Paine ford, which was the great rendezvous for three neighborhoods. There were perhaps a hundred people in the river. Some were swimming, some on horses and others in canoes made out of hollow sycamore trees. After Ben had crossed the river he tied George to a sapling and came in company with Buford Wyatt, a neighbor, down the river in a canoe to where Pennix was paddling around in shallow water, and asked Pennix if he wanted a ride? What boy ever refused an invitation to go riding in a canoe?

They rowed the canoe up the river and into deep water near the shore, when Buford took Pennix by the back of his neck and heels and pitched him head first out into the deep water. At the same time Ben yelled:

"Swim, walk, run, jump, or drown!"

Pennix sank and rose and struggled for a moment at the surface, but went down again, and on coming to the top the second time he found his big brother swimming playfully around him. Pennix called in a loud watery voice for help, but the only answer was:

"Swim, walk, run, jump, or drown!"

Ben afterward declared that he had his eye on Pennix all the time and did not intend to let him drown, and in case he went down the third time he would have dived after him and brought him up to swim with him to the bank or put him back in the canoe.

But strangely Pennix hit that system of swimming known as "dog-fashion"; that is, a downward and forward stroke of the arms. To his surprise and joy he did not go down any more, and was soon making a little headway toward the shore, while his big brother Ben swam near with his usual ease and free way, and kept up his frightful shout:

"Swim, run, jump, walk, or drown!"

When Pennix's feet touched bottom he waded down to where his brother John was turning hand-springs in the sand, and quickly told him about his harrowing experience. They lost no time in getting on their garments, mounted old Rose and Jenny, and when they got home they told their father the story.

Pennix's father asked several questions about the trip in the canoe, the pitch overboard, and what efforts were made to rescue Pennix, but said nothing further until Ben and Buford came back and were putting their horses away. He then started for the barn, Pennix and John following. The boys expected to see the "fur fly," as they could tell by his actions and efforts at self-restraint that he was thoroughly aroused. They had seen him in that silent, morose, self-contained mood before, and they now rejoiced at the thought that this time they were not the subjects of his wrath. How proud they felt of their father and how glad they were that he was "on their side"! He seemed a regular giant that nothing could withstand.

On entering the barn he called Buford and Ben and asked for a confirmation or denial of Pennix's

report, which, of course, could not be denied. Then, turning to Buford, he said:

"I have always trusted you with my boys because I thought them safe in your hands; but since your actions to-day I have no more confidence in you than the snake that crawls in the grass. I want you to understand that I have no use for you, and I now order you off my premises and warn you never to put your foot on my farm again. Go!"

Buford hesitated, but there was no longer any hesitation on the part of Pennix's father. The conflict that followed was furious but of short duration. One was a man in the prime of life, the other a man over sixty years of age. One fought on the defense, the other with the wrath of an injured father. Both were large, powerful men, but when Buford struck the ground after the second or third blow there was life enough in him to holler "'nuff." He then went to the branch near the barn, washed his face and sneaked off home. But the good work was not yet finished. Ben was taken around the corner of the barn and into a near-by hazel bush thicket, and as Pennix and John, looking through the logs of the empty crib, beheld the merry ceremony going on, they laughed, danced, and giggled with supreme satisfaction.

Pennix's father was just six feet high and weighed two hundred pounds, and he bore the reputation of being the strongest man in the country.

Those who remember the old Missourian of fifty years ago will understand what it meant to be the strongest man in the neighborhood. Notwithstand-

ing his great strength, he rarely had an altercation with a neighbor, and never had a lawsuit in his life, but when the life of his son was wantonly exposed to harm and danger his wrath was fully aroused. Buford, soon after this incident, moved out of the country and disappeared.

One bright, frosty morning in early autumn, Pat, Ike, Bee and Billy Bacon, and Bud Smith, their visiting cousin, were seen coming around the corner of the little orchard carrying sacks and buckets. Pennix and his brother John knew that they were after milk and apples. Plans for an ambush were immediately formed. Pennix and his brother hastened, unseen, to the henhouse, where they picked up a handful of turkey feathers; then they went to the shop, where they found an old hatchet, then to the barn for a corn knife and some ropes, and then by a circuitous route they reached the Pit-a-pat road, which was a path leading from the Bacon settlement to Brazil Valley, and was used often by barefoot children. It was so smooth and even that the bare feet would go pit-a-pat as they trod over it. It was over this path that the children came and were to return.

Pennix and John smeared a quantity of pokeberry and elderberry juice over their faces, and arranging their clothing in Indian style and sticking the turkey feathers in their hats, they concealed themselves behind the trees where they would show "Indian" to the best advantage, and awaited the return of their victims.

Presently the children appeared coming up the

road. Ike was in front carrying a sack of apples on his shoulder. Bud followed him, munching on an apple. Next was the little freckle-faced Bee, carrying a small bucket of milk. Then came Billy carrying a bucket in each hand, while Pat, commonly called "Crawfish" on account of his double toes, brought up the rear and was empty-handed.

They came along laughing and talking, all unconscious of the presence of lurking savages, when all of a sudden Pennix and John stepped across the Pit-a-pat road just in front of them and raised what they thought to be the terrible "war-whoop." Pandemonium followed; milk buckets dropped to the ground and apples went rolling down the hill. Pennix seized Bee and tied him to a tree. John got Billy and Bud both in a lump and made them fast to a sapling, but Pat and Ike escaped and went bounding through the woods, yelling at the top of their voices. Billy almost got away; he got one foot loose and was untying the knot that fastened the other foot, when Pennix got there just in time to prevent his escape. The three captives were then securely fastened to separate saplings. Bud screamed and pleaded for his life most pitifully. Bee became hysterical at times, but Billy did not whimper, declaring that he knew who it was and that he was not afraid.

Then began the war-dance and the grunting of a dismal guttural song and the waving of the old hatchet and corn knife. Then some limbs and twigs were placed around the foot of the saplings to which the victims were tied, and then some more dancing

and grunting. At times Bee would scream at the top of his voice and call for help, but Pennix could not say to him, "We will not hurt you; we are only playing Indian," for Bee did not understand the Indian tongue. Pennix did not speak any other, and there were no interpreters present. Now and then there would be a lull in the dancing and a council would be held by the two Indians, who apparently could not decide whether to take their captives to the great chief or tomahawk them on the spot. But presently they decided what to do, and no decision was ever carried into effect with as little delay. Mrs. Bacon, the mother of the captives, accompanied by her daughter and the mother of Bud, appeared on top of the hill, and were now seen coming down the Pit-a-pat road under a full head of steam. It may be said that Pennix and his brother John now made the run of their lives. Over a mile was traveled before they halted or spoke. They made for the base of a big rock, where they intended to make a final stand and fight their pursuers, if they were pursued, with rocks and clubs, and sell their lives as dearly as possible. As soon as they regained sufficient rest so that they could talk and hear each other's voices above the beating of their hearts, they held a council in English. Long and earnestly did they go over the question which troubles so many when in distress: What to do, what is best? They felt certain that Mrs. Bacon would go down to the house and make her complaint to their father, and take along the old hatchet and corn knife as mute but good witnesses in her case. So, hoping

for the best, but determined to meet the worst in true Indian style, by giving no outward sign of inward pain, they decided to go down to the branch, wash the juice stains off their faces, arrange their clothes in the fashion of the paleface, go to the little field and gather corn in accordance with the parental instructions given them that morning.

Scarcely had a hundred ears of corn been jerked off the stalks when they heard the voice of their father calling them to the house. They dared not refuse to obey the summons. On entering the house they found Mrs. Bacon, her daughter Nancy, Billy's mother, and two of the former captives. Fury was pictured in Mrs. Bacon's flaming black eyes; her voice trembled and her face was pale from exertion and excitement. The old corn knife and hatchet, rope and turkey feathers were there also. Pennix's father called the boys one at a time to his chair, and after carefully examining their faces for pokeberry stains pronounced them guilty. The old gentleman was usually calm, but now he seemed to be struggling with his feelings, and appeared to be seriously grieved. He knew that he had two impulsive sons to control and direct, and whether too much rod would toughen their backs and harden their consciences was a question that gave him no little concern. He assured the aggrieved family that his boys would be well punished and that the children need have no fears of being molested in the future.

Pennix's mother then prepared a good luncheon with strong coffee and rich cream, "store sugar" and pumpkin pie, of which they all partook freely.

Then, filling up their pails with milk, and with a large roll of butter and two sacks of choice apples (which Pennix and his brother John had to carry to Mrs. Bacon's home), they took their departure over Pit-a-pat road, very much reconciled.

When Pennix and John returned from Mrs. Bacon's, their father, the recognized chief, led them out of the kitchen, and as they passed out their mother said:

"Be merciful."

How Pennix did then wish that she was going to do the whipping instead of his father! He always whipped John first, leaving Pennix to writhe in anticipation, which, however painful, was still better than realization.

With a trembling voice and an earnestness that Pennix will never forget he expressed the great trouble that he felt, and feared that such thoughtless, cruel conduct would lead to worse. He spoke of the rights and comforts of others, and said that all the children in the neighborhood should be free to come and go as they pleased with no one to molest or make afraid. "Let it never be said," he added, "that your native State has among her children those who, on becoming men, would murder, steal, crack a safe, rob a bank, or hold up a train." Then with a hand that trembled not, realization set in. Pennix thought that the last lick would never come, but it did, and then the boys were sent back to the little field to gather corn.

Pennix could always persuade his mother not to whip him whenever he chose to, for whenever his

eyes began to sparkle with tears she would stop of her own accord, being too tender-hearted to whip her children. Again and again would she prepare to apply the rod, but Pennix would advance to her and say:

"Mother, you would not whip your own little baby boy, would you—Pennix, whom you have so often rocked to sleep and prayed for?"

But if he were in a bad humor he would say:

"You may whip me, but remember that I will kill a turkey for each lick you give me."

Once or twice she whipped him for that threat, but a row of dead turkeys, placed where she could see them, showed her that he had kept his word, and it always broke up the whipping when he threatened death to the turkeys.

One day when Pennix's father was away from home the boy took George out of the barn, strapped an old McClellan saddle upon his back, mounted him and rode in a gallop, up hill, down hill, and upon level roads for the greater part of a June day. He visited most of the neighbors, took in Bald Knob, making the obedient beast climb those rough and rugged heights, then swept around by the country post-office, and had the horse back in the barn before his father came home. But the next morning the horse was so stiff that he could not be taken out of the barn. Pennix's father thought that he was "foundered," and was treating him for foundering until some of the neighbors informed him to the contrary. Pennix was then taken to the barn, and in an adjoining stall he was very impressively taught

the much-needed lesson that boys as well as horses have feelings.

One day Bill Haggard came to the house and left his old "long tom" rifle and shot-pouch at the porch door. He usually took them inside.

Pennix and John emptied the old, long, greasy powder-horn of all the powder that it contained; and proceeding without delay to the crest of the hill they were preparing to blow off the top of the Ozarks and level up the country, when, alas! their father and Bill Haggard appeared on the scene. Explosions and lamentations followed their appearance. Pennix wished that Bill Haggard had never been; that the Texas steer had never been permitted to carry that powder-horn on its head, but had been converted to the ways of civilized life when young by being dehorned. In his heart he cursed the man who invented powder, and wished that Solomon had no followers in this vale of tears.

A few miles from the home of Pennix was the home of a family by the name of McMullins. They were of Irish descent, although they claimed to be French, and they were noted far and near as one of the laziest families in the neighborhood. They lived in the woods by the road over which Pennix and John made frequent trips to their grandma and grandpa's beautiful plantation on the Meramec River. The boys would often tear down rods of their rail fencing so that the McMullins would have to labor a little to keep the stock out of their fields, and all surplus cats were left on the McMullin's premises. Shocks of corn and fodder were frequently scat-

tered broadcast in order to make them work. Of course a careful survey, so as to see that the coast was clear, had to be made before any of this kind of activity could be carried on, but it went on for two or three seasons, and the McMullins were unable to find out who the perpetrators were. Finally, Pennix and John became more desperate and daring, and on one occasion they found the McMullin children playing along the banks of a neighboring creek. The two boys, dismounting from the saddles of old Rose and Jenny, tied the mules to a sapling, and then, stripping the clothing off the backs of the McMullins, they gave them the first and possibly the last bath they ever had. They scrubbed them with sand and gravel and soused them again and again, sometimes head first. When they were scrupulously clean, Pennix and John mounted their mules and went to the pawpaw patch.

On reaching home late that afternoon they found all the male McMullins there, armed to the teeth. They not only wanted money, but insisted upon having the privilege of whipping the boys until they were satisfied. It took the best diplomatic power of which Pennix's father was capable to avoid a bloody feud right then and there. But he was positive with them, and told them that no man or set of men could lay their hands on his boys when in anger unless over his dead body, and he warned them against retaliation in the future. Finally a few paper dollars, Pennix's pet calf and John's favorite colt appeased their wrath, and they took their departure in a friendly mood.

The next day their father called the boys upstairs, where he had two hickory switches, and when Pennix and John saw the twisted hickory switches they began to wilt, to writhe, and to wail. It was an affecting scene, and their father's great heart was sorely tried and touched, for he too began to cry, and those heavy, heartfelt sobs will linger in the memory of Pennix as long as he lives. The old man took the boys on his knees, and in a trembling voice spoke of a father's love and sorrow, and even called upon God to give him the wisdom to train his sons aright. The hickory withe was not used, but with a kiss he bade the boys go about their play. Pennix and John agreed between themselves to do better, and they promised each other that they would "get religion" and join the church; but unfortunately there was no revival of religion then going on, and so they waited for a more convenient season.

The old man never whipped his boys after that.

CHAPTER VI

JUST below the McDonald ford there was another favorite swimming hole, where the usual crowd congregated on Saturday afternoons, and at times on Sundays. Here they would dive off a log which was lodged against some trees and so embedded in the earth and so fastened among some giant rocks that it remained a solid structure year in and year out in spite of floods.

One of the interesting characters, and one who was a frequent and welcome visitor there on swimming days, was one Jonathan Lyons, a man large of frame, strong of muscle, good-natured, and probably the best swimmer in the State. It gave Pennix great pleasure to get on Jonathan's huge back as he swam through the water, whistling like a steamboat. Oftentimes he would swim down stream carrying as many boys as could find standing room. It was his boast that he could do so, and his only warning was, "Hold on tight," and with a whistle away he would go like a great float. Jonathan was a great favorite among the small boys, not only at the swimming hole, but wherever he went, for he was one of those great, generous men to whom the heart of a youngster would instantly and naturally turn, either for sympathy or for frolic.

But Jonathan had a defect in his speech; he stut-

tered. He afterward joined the Baptist church, and with this he quit the swimming hole, and became a devout and zealous follower. One day he was at the home of Pennix and the boy said to him:

"Jonathan, do you feel any change of heart since you got religion?"

"Y-y-es, I f-e-e-l bet-bet-ter than w-when w-what I—I—was."

"In what way do you feel better, Jonathan?"

"W-well, I—I don't c-care to—to hunt—and swim—and dive o-off of r-rocks—a-and l-logs like I—I o-once w-was—used—to—to—do, b-but—t-to—stay to hum—nights with—my f-family a-and to—to go to—ch-church—and l-listen to—to the preacher. I—I—I—haven't t-t-took—a chaw to-backer in—church—during—preachen'—since I—I was b-baptized."

"But I want to know your religious experience at the time you were put under the water. How'd you feel? You know, Jonathan, that the Methodists claim that you have to get religion at the mourners' bench and the Baptists claim that you get religion when baptized. Now how did you feel when you were put under the water?"

"How did I—f-feel? W-why just like I—I—did when I u-used to dive—off—that sy-sycamore—log—at t-the o-old McDonald ford. T-t-hat—is the—way I—f-felt."

Just then Pennix's mother made him stop asking questions, and no further testimony was evolved in regard to this much-mooted question.

About this time Pennix and John commenced the

formation of a new language. They had no use for a written language, for they were never separated over a half day, and always slept together in their little trundle bed. The Indian tongue had been tried and proved a dismal failure. They wanted to talk to each other and not let others know what they were talking about. At first, of course, it was slow work, as new names had to be given to the common things of everyday life. But in time they could converse with each other and no one but themselves knew what they meant.

For instance, a cow was "unt"; a chicken was a "santick"; a hog was a "soathead." To go swimming was "slunge." To make a visit to a watermelon patch by day was "sunny," and by night was "moony." To go hunting for rabbits in the woods was "smoke up the tree"; to go for squirrels was "climb, scare and Heck."

In this way hundreds of words and sentences were put together, until a fluent and funny conversation could be carried on to their own great delight and to the bewilderment of those who might be present, for it was in the presence of others that they took the greatest delight in speaking the unknown tongue. Sometimes their conversation and merriment became so amazing and embarrassing, especially if company were present, that Pennix and John were often sent out of the room or away from the table just at the time when they had the greatest need of their mysterious jargon.

The summer glided into autumn with a steady, silent glide, and autumn was followed by Jack Frost,

who covered the swimming holes with his icy sheet, and roared in the forest where dwelt the night winds and the snow clouds.

The urchins were together in school now, and pursued the same blue-back spelling book, McGuffey's readers, and Ray's Third Part Arithmetic. A new teacher, who could preach as well as teach, had been arranged for and was ready for duty on schedule time. Teachers, in children's minds, are as sure as taxes and death. But on the opening day, scarcely had the first great fire got under headway, when the stick chimney and the roof were found to be in flames. The teacher belonged to the latter-day sort, for he carried and owned a bell that would ring, and when the alarm of fire was given by the sons and daughters of the Ozarks he walked to and fro through the schoolroom ringing his bell, which action on his part showed that he had lived in the city and knew what to do in case of fire. But as the fire company was slow in getting to the scene of the fire and the creek hydrants were all frozen up, the old Harmon schoolhouse was slowly but surely reduced to a pile of ashes. The teacher went his way and the scholars went theirs, and whether a new building ever went up at that place or not Pennix never interested himself to find out.

On the first of April Pennix's parents went away from home, and "fat Sis" from "up the creek" came down to keep company to his sister Laura.

While the two girls were out at the cowpen, milking about twenty cows, Pennix and John conceived the idea that it would be capital fun and a good

"April fool" trick to upset everything "upsettable" inside of the house. Accordingly, bureau drawers were emptied of their contents; wash tubs, churns, pots and dishes were piled on the beds; a pet pig was brought from its pen, tied to a rooster, and both securely fastened to the grate in the fireplace of the front room. Many other changes were made in the arrangement of the furniture and equipment, and then the two boys hurried to the loft of the "old house" and commenced shucking corn.

Their father had instructed them to shuck twenty-five hundred ears of corn each day while he was away, and as his orders had been forgotten the day before, and as he was expected home that evening, it was necessary to do two days' work in one.

After shucking about a thousand ears Pennix exclaimed:

"Let's go and see what they do."

Just then Laura came up the stairs, followed by Sis, and the battle began. While ears of corn were flying thick and fast, Pennix managed to make good his escape and hurried down the steps.

"Top the whipper-will over the bumblebee!" his brother shouted, which meant to run for the long barn and get on the center beam.

But Pennix had not got half way when he saw Laura after him in hot pursuit, and seeing that he could not make the "bumblebee," he turned in a circle, hoping to meet John, who was then running toward him with all possible speed. But alas! just as he was putting in his best efforts on this circle and it seemed likely that he would be rescued, he

"stumped his toe," fell, and was captured. He was ordered up and off the ground; but he lay there on his back, and every time Laura approached he would kick at her. But she soon made a rush, and grabbed him by his hair and lifted him to his feet. Then, placing her hand firmly among his long sunny locks, she marched him to the fence and told him to "climb the fence, go to the house and straighten things up." Pennix mounted the high rail fence with great cheerfulness and a happy smile.

"Catamount her!" he shouted to John, who was near at hand.

This meant to jump and get her. But his brother was watching his chance, and the reply came back, Center hole!"

This meant "Go to and stay at a certain thicket just above the big orchard." It was their place of meeting when from any cause they got separated.

Pennix had no time to see what happened on the other side of the fence, as he was too busy in getting away from the scene of conflict. John came in the course of an hour to the center hole, looking fatigued and disconsolate. They rested awhile, and then went back to the old loft, and after shucking corn for about eight hours they saw their parents driving down the lane. They went to meet them, and told their father that they would put away the team, and for him to go to the house as he was no doubt tired and hungry. He thanked them for being so thoughtful, and said that he appreciated the kindness of his sons.

The house was in its normal condition when father and mother returned, and as Pennix and John had shucked more than twenty-five hundred ears of corn, and had put away the team, there was little said and nothing done regarding the April fool trick.

In early spring Pennix's parents concluded that there were too many chickens on the farm; that the brahmas and buff cochins were diminishing in numbers and that the "dinghills" and "bantums" were proportionally increasing, and before any hens "went to sitting" it was well to get rid of the latter breeds.

Pennix and John had a controlling interest, or thought they had, in the chicken business, and for the preceding two years had favored the "dinghills" on account of their fighting qualities and their beautiful plumage.

As soon as it became evident that their parents were arranging and intended to take a load of the "dinghills" to market the following day, the two boys held a council to devise ways and means by which to save a few dozen of their favorite cocks and pullets.

Coops and boxes had been prepared that day and left around the hen-house. These were to be filled with chickens before going to bed so as to have them ready next morning at the peep of day. Pennix suggested that the coops and boxes be filled with favorite "dinghills," then carried and put in the barn loft, but his brother had devised a better plan.

At early dark the work of rescue commenced. Great secrecy was necessary as well as great care, for they had to make sure that no chicken had a chance to squall and thereby alarm the house and dogs. Their roosting-place was well known, and after a stealthy approach had been made to their perch, hands were extended cautiously at the same time, and grabbed the "santick" by the feet and neck simultaneously. Dinghill after dinghill was carried upstairs into the vacant rooms of the dwelling-house and deposited in a cuddy hole or placed upon the stair banisters. Scarcely had the rescue been completed before Pennix's parents, with the "help," lit a lantern and proceeded to the hen-house. Pennix and John offered their services, which were declined on the plea that some of the "dinghills" might get away from them.

So Pennix got the *Child's Friend*, the Sunday-school paper, and John took the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, and both were reading when their parents came back from the hen-house.

Pennix heard his mother remark, on coming into the adjoining room, the kitchen:

"I don't know what has become of the dinghills; they must be roosting out, for I counted them this morning and we have not got half of them, and the very ones I wanted to get rid of we could not find."

"Better ask the boys about them," a voice said, but she said no, she did not want to interrupt their reading.

As they were going to town next morning and

such trips called for early rising, a chapter was read out of the Good Book, a short prayer offered, and then the mother went with Pennix and John to the little trundle-bed, where "Now I lay me down to sleep" was said; then the house was still.

When Pennix awoke in the morning his father was out "feeding," and his mother singing her favorite song, "My Mountain Home." Within a short time all were sitting around the breakfast table. As their father asked grace all heads were bowed:

"Accept our grateful acknowledgment for this manifestation of Divine Providence." He had just uttered the last words, when the cocks upstairs turned loose and—well, they crowed single file, in volleys and by platoons; some were in the middle of their crow when others were just starting in; some would begin where others left off. The hens, who could not crow for some reason or other (Pennix could never figure out why a hen cannot crow), flopped their wings. Pennix looked at John, and John looked at Pennix; the parents looked at each other and then both looked at the boys.

For some time not a word was spoken. They were all listening and looking, for it was difficult to locate the crowing and what it was all about. Then the old man looked at the boys meaningly.

"It seems as though we had a hen-house upstairs!"

Then he and his wife lit a lantern and started upstairs, followed by the two boys. There on the banister railing was a twenty-foot row of the fool-

ish but beautiful "dinghills." They would jump up and crow right in the glare of the lantern and then sit down again. Then others would rise, flap their wings, stretch their necks and cry, "cock-a-doodle-a-do!"

After taking in the situation all returned to the breakfast table, and a suppressed smile on the faces of the parents gave the two boys some hope. They talked to each other in the unknown tongue, and reached an understanding that an effort should be made to save some of the cocks, if an opportunity came, as no plan could then be formed.

Breakfast was over.

"If ma is willing, each of you may pick out five of the dinghills, but the rest go to market," was the decree.

Of course ma was willing, and with this understanding the parents and sons climbed the stairs again. As the lantern was held for the boys to make their selections John said:

"Heck the santicks." This meant save the best fighters.

Their father stood close as the cocks were picked out, so as to see that no more than the allotted number were taken back to the hen-house. The chickens in the cuddy holes had sense enough to keep their mouths shut, and were turned loose just as soon as the parents were out of sight on their way to the market.

CHAPTER VII

PENNIX's father believed in furnishing plenty of work for the boys, especially when he was away from home, and he always assigned a task for them to do each day. The day he took the chickens to market the task was to chop wood. Most boys dislike the wood pile, and Pennix was no exception. It must be said to their credit, however, that on that particular day the boys did a creditable day's work, and it was so pronounced by their father.

Evening came, their parents returned, and what did they bring? A highly colored picture-book, "Little Red Riding Hood," and a pair of red-topped boots for Pennix, and a gaudy book, "Blue-beard," and a pair of plain boots for John.

Boys of the present day cannot realize what it meant to the two small boys to have a pair of copper-toed, red-topped boots.

Pennix put his boots on, and then walked to and fro across the front porch singing over and over again all the Sunday-school songs that he knew. He was so happy that he could not eat; he could not think of going to bed; he could do nothing but sing Sunday-school songs.

Some time after dark his mother came out and carried him in to put him to bed. He fell asleep with his boots on, and later his mother found him

sitting in an arm-chair in the front room, sound asleep. She carried him, boots and all, and put him in bed, where he slept in peace until the regular "getting up time."

The book "Little Red Riding Hood" was scarcely read, but "Blue-beard" was a treasure, and was read and read until nearly every sentence and paragraph were known by heart. It was gorgeously illustrated, and appealed to their childish minds and fancies.

About this time the "soatheads," or hogs, began to die with the cholera, and whenever a dead hog was found it was dragged to a remote isolated spot in a thicket of hazel and elder bushes on the banks of Brazil River, and here the "Blue Chamber" was founded.

Many victims for the "Blue Chamber" were in this way paced side by side, until they numbered sixty-three.

On one occasion a number of pigs were in a pen, and a vicious one bit Pennix's pet pig, whereupon Pennix jumped the fence to avenge the injury.

With rock in hand and arm uplifted he addressed the bad pig in the language of Blue-beard to Fatima:

"I see by the blood stain on this key that you have broken your promise and entered the Blue Chamber. Prepare to take your place among those you saw there."

The bad pig, however, did not ask for "time in which to prepare for death." The rock was aimed at the bad pig, but the pet pig at this moment

jumped forward and received the blow, which proved fatal.

Pennix was much troubled over the death of his pet, and in council with John decided that the Blue-beard administration was not a good thing on the farm. Accordingly, Blue-beard's policy was abandoned; the Blue Chamber went by default until the big flood in early June carried the victims down the Brazil River into the Meramec, and to the Mississippi and out upon the Gulf of Mexico.

Ah, the big June flood! To Pennix Noah's flood was but a sprinkle by comparison. The clouds began to lower and the rain began to fall during the middle of the afternoon, a rain far different from the Oregon drizzles. Branches and creeks were soon out of their banks, and the old Brazil was busy carrying off the water as Pennix went to bed. But there was no sleep for those who bore the responsibility of the family. They kept vigil that night.

The rain fell all night long, and next morning there was a wide expanse of water. The river, extending from hill to hill, was a mile wide, and all the farming land was under water. Drift-wood and old buildings could be seen floating upon a rough and roaring body of water. Within two days the flood had passed, and the plow land in the valley had been swept as clean as a floor; all the soil, as deep as it had been plowed, had been swept away, as well as the corn, wheat and oats that had been planted. Rails, however, were com-

mon property, and scarcely had the flood subsided when the work of rebuilding the fences and replanting the crops commenced. Most of the stock in the county had sought safety on the highlands, and as people never built their houses in the lowlands there was no loss of human life. The hard virgin soil of the bottom was plowed and planted in corn and a late fall brought a good crop, but the oat and wheat crops were lost.

Coon and opossum hunting by night and rabbit and squirrel hunting by day was Pennix's delight. He was not permitted to carry a gun, though he knew how to use an axe and usually took one along with him when he went hunting.

When Heck or Trailer, the two dogs, treed a rabbit in a hollow trunk, Pennix would first cut a long forked stick, which he would run up the tree to determine the location of the cotton-tail. If it were near the ground he could use a forked stick, and by securing a firm hold in the fur and hide of the rabbit, wind it up in the stick, and pull the rabbit out of the tree; but if the rabbit were too far up the tree and the tree were too large to chop down, he would make a fire in the hole and get up a good smoke. A rabbit can't stand much smoke, and in a few minutes it could be heard coming down. The dogs would prick up their ears and whine, and nervously watch the hole. Suddenly there was a cloud, a scattering of sticks, an eruption of ashes, and the rabbit found refuge in—the mouth of one of the dogs.

Many a dark night Pennix, with old Heck at his heels, crept noiselessly along the turn-row or by the edge of a cornfield until the crackling of a stalk betrayed the location of old Zip Coon, then the words "Sick 'em" would start old Heck to the spot where Zip was feasting on the Indian corn. Pennix would follow up as fast as he could, but old Zip would, at the first alarm, make tracks for the hollow trees in the woods, and Heck would usually have him killed by the time Pennix got there.

One night, by much coaxing and a little bribery, Ike was induced to go on one of these coon hunts. Ike was an ugly negro, and as black as the bottom of a coal mine in the dark. He was both cowardly and superstitious, and much preferred a warm bed to a coon hunt on a frosty night. On this particular night, Pennix, Ike and old Heck, in single file and in the order mentioned, with slow and stealthy tread approached the bank of a lonely river, when Heck suddenly leaped over the bank and disappeared in the dark shadow below. The moon was shining by spells and spurts, metes and bounds, according to the size and speed of the clouds that were fleeing across its face.

The coon must have been enjoying a feast of turtle eggs, which, by the way, is its favorite food, when old Heck made him seek safety on a big log that had fallen across the creek. Heck was at the heels of Zip when they started to cross the water on the log, and Ike, in his awakened enthusiasm, brought up the rear. Pennix remained on the

bank. The creek at this place was narrow and deep and the current quite swift. Presently a plunge! then a heavier plunge than before! then a splashing plunge followed by the wail of a human voice: "Lord! good Lord! save this chile!"

The coon had taken to the water, Heck had followed, but Ike had lost his balance and fallen off the log. He had but little trouble in swimming and wading to the shore, and soon pulled himself out on the bank.

"I'se goin' coon hunt'n' no mo'!" he exclaimed. "If de Lord hadn't heard de cry of dis chile whar'd I be? Dat coon 'd hab dun got me shoo, an' Ike hab been down in de bottom of dat dere kreek. I'se goin' home, so I is, an' I nebber want Pen Pennox to say 'le's go coon huntin'' to me no mo'. I'se done huntin' fo' coon—I is!"

Pennix paid no more attention to him, but looked at his dog. He could catch only glimpses of the combatants in the water, but a battle for life was going on. Snuffing, puffing, gurgling, splashing, and smothered yelping filled the air as they drifted down stream and toward the other bank. Heck was evidently trying to get the coon to land, but the coon, with equal intelligence, preferred a naval engagement. The noise gradually subsided until a dead calm prevailed. Pennix strained his anxious eyes to see what had become of his great dog, but nothing could be seen or heard. He then ran back to the tree across the creek with the intention of crossing the log in order to find and save his dog, but he had scarcely started across the log when he

saw a big form approaching from the other shore, carrying something in its mouth. Pennix gave the coon to Ike and they went home happy.

One moonlight night Trailer treed a 'possum in a persimmon bush. The 'possum stood akimbo on his hind legs, showed his teeth, and kept on eating persimmons. Pennix shook the persimmon bush, but the 'possum hung on by his tail, which he wrapped around the bush, and as the limb swayed to and fro he nodded in the breezes. Suddenly his tail hold failed and down came the 'possum. As soon as he struck the ground he "played 'possum"; that is, he pretended to be dead. Pennix took him by the tail and carried him home, and when he got there some of the "coons" thought they would bring him to life. They heated a poker and touched his lips, and even put the hot poker in his mouth, but not a muscle moved or a nerve quivered. Then Ike whistled a few times through his teeth and the 'possum got away in the dark.

The smoke-house was a great rendezvous for 'possum in the fall and winter, especially soon after the "butchering." The meat trough consisted of an old hollow sycamore log, about thirty feet long, and three or four feet deep. From fifty to a hundred hogs were salted down in that old log every fall and winter, and the 'possums came in for their share of fresh pork. As the smoke-house was a huge log structure, with open cracks between the logs, the 'possums had no trouble in getting to the meat unless Heck or Trailer kept them off. The door was open most of the time, for no one would

think of bothering a meat-house, and what little the 'possums got was no loss.

Many were the nights that the sleep of the inmates of the house was broken by the barking of the dogs, which would not quiet until the 'possums were run out of the smoke-house. On entering it with lighted lantern a long row of grinning animals were to be seen, all busy with their frugal meal. They would eat awhile and then rise up on their hunkers and grin some more; then, with a self-possession that showed that they had been raised in the best of society, they would quietly resume their place at the table. But when the dogs went up on the trough to share bread or bones with them, the strangers would hastily excuse themselves and leave in a hurry.

One spring morning when Pennix was hunting rabbits in the woods, Trailer treed a female 'possum in a hollow log, from which Pennix smoked her out. She left the tree under a full head of smoke and steam, but Trailer picked her up on the run, and half a dozen little 'possums were thrown high in the air, for the female 'possum carries her young in a pouch. They were about the size of kittens before they get their eyes open. Pennix carried them to the house and wanted to raise them as pets, but, his mother objecting, he put them with a nest of little kittens, about their size, thinking that the cat would adopt them as part of her family or perhaps would never know the difference. But the mother cat had no love and nourishment to bestow on the 'possum children, for that afternoon nothing

could be found of them but scraps of fur and pieces of bone.

At this time catamounts, wild-cats, panthers, and timber-wolves inhabited the more remote regions, and their screams and yelps were often heard in the hours of the night coming from the bluffs and caves.

Once when Miss Priscilla Wrenfro was making a trip on horse-back along a solitary ridge that paralleled the Meramec, there appeared just ahead of her a panther, lying flat in the road switching its tail from side to side. Her horse took fright, wheeled, and ran away. Again the panther appeared before them; the horse stopped and the panther would squat as if making ready to spring! Quickly the horse made another turn, and this time fled through the open woods. As the panther was seen no more it is presumed that the horse left it in the race.

Once a wild-cat sprang from a tree, lighting behind Mr. Brighton, who was passing under the tree at the time, and "rode behind" for some distance. It was fully occupied in holding on, then fell off to the great satisfaction of the rider and horse, which would never "carry double."

Pennix and John had an adventure with the gray timber-wolves, and as the circumstances are well remembered by a great number who yet dwell in the hills of the Ozarks, and as the story illustrates the heroism and devotion of Hector, it is deemed of sufficient importance to relate it in full.

A spelling-school had been announced at "old Liberty Church," and all the boys and girls were

eager to display their knowledge of Webster's old blue-back spelling-book.

In June the wolves go in packs and are fiercer than at any other time of the year. Their ferocity may be due to the scarcity of young pigs, calves, and carcasses, but it is more probably due to the increasing of the appetites of the young wolves and the demand they make on the mother-wolves for food and drink.

The boys from "up the creek" came by "Uncle Ben's" to get some of the ripe red apples. John accompanied the neighbor boys on their way to the spelling-school, while Pennix was to follow them just as soon as he could catch old Rose. After chasing Rose around the pasture a few times he became discouraged and impatient at the delay, so availing himself of the last resort, he called Heck, the dog, to his help. No sooner did the mule see the dog than she made haste to reach the barn before the dog could reach her. Mounted upon her back with Heck following at her heels, Pennix was soon within Liberty Church, and as happy as any one there.

Hector, by the way, was of unknown parentage, but of the staghound and cur species. He weighed 125 pounds, had powerful jaws, was full and broad across the chest, but slender in the loins; his hams were broad and thin; his legs muscular, eyes bright and small; his hair short and brown, ears neither large nor small, tail long and tapering. He was the terror to all wrong-doers, and no dog had ever been able to stand before him. No squirrel ever reached

the ground alive if Hector stood under the tree when the fatal leap was made, for the squirrel would light in the dog's mouth.

He handled coons with as much ease as a cat handles a mouse, and no "'possuming" 'possum ever survived after a few crunches by Heck. In the dog arena at Nova Scotia Iron Works no dog, whether local or imported, was ever able to gain even a temporary advantage over Heck.

Once, however, a large yellow dog, a dog that looked like a cougar, and Heck were standing on their hind feet fighting without gain or loss on either side, when Pennix, the owner of Heck, then a little boy, jumped the rope and cheered his dog on to quick victory. This was Heck's last battle in the arena; his father stopped the cruel sport and no one would bet against him.

Well, the spelling-match lasted late into the night, but was ended by the sudden appearance of one of the most violent storms that ever swept over that country so famous for hurricanes.

Pennix and John hastened to where old Rose had been tied, but to their dismay found the mule had broken loose and fled at the approach of the storm. The little boys then started home, accompanied by Heck.

The wind suddenly changed to an immense gale; the rain fell in huge drops; the forest roared with breaking limbs and falling timbers, and now and then could be heard the crash of an immense giant of the forest. The flash of the lightning lent an awful lurid grandeur to the scene, but lit up the path

for the boys to travel. The greatest danger that now seemed to threaten was the falling timber. But soon a sound was heard that filled their hearts with fear—it was the barking of timber-wolves! Only their faith in the great dog Heck gave them hope and courage. Nearer and nearer came the hungry pack, and louder, clearer their sharp barking. The storm's fury increased. Rain fell in drenching sheets. The lightning made the supercharged atmosphere appear like a vast sea of fire and flame. The thunder rose and fell. The wind seemed to be sweeping the forest off the face of the earth. The wolves were upon them! Hector gave a savage growl and met them. The battle was on! The boys could hear the clashing of their fangs and barks above the storm, and as the lightning lit up the scene they could catch glimpses of the combatants; now fighting at their right, then to the rear, above them on the left, then on in front and falling back to their very feet; sometimes singly, sometimes in a heap, but always near them. The wolves, by sheer force of numbers, would drive the dog near the boys, when they would cheer him; then, with a might few dogs possess, he would plunge into the mass and fight them back. At length there was a lull in the storm, the wind and the rain abated, but the lightning and the thunder were seen and heard from the receding storm. Pennix and John were now within a half mile from home, and, mounting upon a huge oak that had fallen across the path, they called in a loud voice:

“Here Watch; here Trailer!” and presently they

were thrilled by the shrill, sharp bark of Watch and the deep bay of Trailer. Pennix and his brother would call out at short intervals for the dogs and their response told their anxious hearts that the dogs were hurrying to the rescue. Soon they dashed up and immediately engaged the wolves and drove them back into the forests and to their dens.

Hastening home, the boys told their anxious parents, who listened with deep concern, of their escape. Their father then went to the door and called for the dogs, and they presently came, except Hector. Then, lighting a lantern and with a loaded rifle, they went back to search for him.

When they reached the big tree where the last fight was made, a distressed whine was heard amid the limbs of the fallen tree top. There they found old Heck, lacerated and bleeding at every vein. Near him were two wolves in the agony of death. Dispatching them and lifting up the brave, faithful dog, they bore him to the house, where his wounds were lovingly dressed, and he received the best of care.

After the lapse of a few weeks he was on his feet again, but his health and courage were gone, and the next autumn his brave and generous heart ceased to beat. The boys laid him away with solemn ritual, and erected a monument to his memory.

The wind mourned a sad dirge through the yellow and green leaves of autumn as they put away, in shroud and casket, him who offered up his own life in defense of his young masters.

One stormy night in midwinter when the family

was gathered around the cheerful fireplace, Pennix for some misdemeanor was sent out of the room. He went out on the porch, but as it was too cold to remain there he hastened to the big log barn. He succeeded in "going up unk," and found warmth among the clean Chester White hogs, which occupied a part of the barn.

To "go up unk" was to get down on all fours, and by slow stages, considerable grunting, and more rubbing against the logs of the barn, approach hog fashion the beds where the hogs were lying. This was no easy task, and one requiring no little amount of skill and knowledge of the ways of swine. The feat, however, had been frequently achieved both by Pennix and John. "To jump out boo" was for a hog or hogs to discover the difference between a boy on his hands and knees and a fellow-swine by giving the alarm and go jumping and snorting from his bed.

Oftentimes had Pennix or his brother gone among the clean Chester Whites. One lad would seek to "go up unk," but about the time this feat was nearly accomplished the boy who was then lying with the comfortable "soatheads" would jump out and go *boo! boo!* and all the rest would snort and follow. To thwart a "go up unk" by a "jump out boo" was a source of greater fun and amusement than to make successful "go up unk."

Therefore, on this cold night, when Pennix was ordered to leave the room, he quickly determined to "go up unk" and to remain there all night. He had no trouble in obtaining comfortable quarters

among the "soatheads," as the night was cold and the hogs were indisposed to stir.

Presently he heard his mother's voice calling him to the house, but he did not move. Then he heard his father's voice, and for the first and only time in his life he refused to answer. On looking through the cracks of the log barn Pennix saw the lantern going to the hen-house, and then, returning, it disappeared in the cellar under the house. The lantern came out again and went into the house, and Pennix thought that they had given up the hunt. But lo! there came the lantern toward the barn! John, who had gone to bed, had been awakened and now led the search, and he knew where to go. As the gleam of the lantern approached and grew brighter and brighter, and Pennix saw that all three were after him, his heart seemed to jump; he began to tremble. He had failed and refused to answer the call of his father! The lantern made a bee-line for him.

"We have been hunting for you," they simply said, "and feared that you had frozen to death."

They did not even ask why their calls had not been answered, for they perhaps understood how easy it would have been for Pennix to say, "I did not hear you."

In those days most of the steer calves were broken to the yoke and broken to ride, and there were quite a number of good riding cows on the farm.

In winter time, when bringing them home at night, or shifting the cattle from one stalk field to another, those that were broken to ride were very handy, although they were never "bridlewise," and were

failures as "cow ponies," and they would often run under the grape vines or through thickets in order to rid their backs of trespassers.

One of the pleasures of boyhood was to take old Rose and Jenny and go after the cattle wandering over the range. When found, the cattle were put at full speed and kept on the run until the bells were within hearing distance of the house, then they were allowed to slow up in order to cool off before reaching the cow lots; for if the bells far off gave tokens of flight there were some very direct questions asked.

The cattle would run down hill at full speed, occasionally striking a sapling that would stop their momentum, turn them around, and cause a deflection in the line of direction. If the Brazil had to be crossed, the cattle were driven across at some deep place where they would have to swim.

One afternoon, when they were going after the cattle, and riding leisurely along the bank of the creek, the brothers came to where some boys were swimming, and in accordance with the boyish gallantry of the times, the invitation "Come in" was given and accepted, for it was considered a great breach of etiquette to refuse an invitation to go in swimming.

After a little while a peddler was seen coming along the road carrying a great bundle of merchandise. Pennix stood upon the bank near by and favored him with a song to cheer him up on his weary pilgrimage through this vale of tears.

"Oh, Peddler, where will you stand in that Day, in that Day?"

The moon will be bleeding, the moon will be bleeding;
The rocks will be melting, the rocks will be melting;
Where will you stand, where will you stand in that Day?

“The ocean will be burning, the ocean will be burning;
The hills will be falling, the hills will be falling,
In that day; in that Great Judgment Day; in that Day;
Then, oh, Peddler, where will you stand in that Day?”

When Pennix got home he found the peddler standing on the hearth of the great fireplace, and if he recognized Pennix he kept it to himself.

CHAPTER VIII

THIS story would not be complete without more than a passing notice of the people—grown people—who lived in the Ozarks nearly a half century ago. These people were not all alike; quite the reverse, for here dwelt the poor and the rich, the learned and the unlearned, the cultured and the crude, but above their environments was a hospitality that was the common glory of all.

There was Mrs. Bacon, the mother of Bee, who raised twelve children, none of whom ever saw a baby carriage. When she traveled afoot, as was her usual custom, she would put two of the smallest ones across her side, clothes-pin fashion, and the rest would trot along in front or behind as best suited their fancy.

Pennix remembers having passed a night under her hospitable roof. There was a terrible storm raging, and she took up the planks of the floor and put him with her own children, under the floor, while the tempest raged. Then she put the planks back and prayed to the God of storm not to hurt her or the little children under the floor. Her voice could be heard above the roar of the wind, and when the storm was over she lifted the planks and let them come up and out. The next day she went over to the home of Pennix and, in relating the horrors of the storm, remarked:

"No wonder storms come, the people are so *Godly* wicked!"

Aunt Patsy was the giantess of the valley. She stood six feet high and weighed two hundred pounds. She was slow and steady in her movements, and nothing could cause her to quicken her slow, measured tread. When she had to cross the Brazil afoot she never hunted for a log, but deliberately waded.

Pennix saw her coming down the lane one summer day, just when a rain was coming up the valley below. She could have reached the house in time to escape the shower if she hurried, but she preferred the wetting, and she got it.

Aunt Patsy performed most of the work required in raising the small crops for her family. True, she was slow but steady, and few men could accomplish more work in a day than she. She was often in the field ahead of the sun, but would quit work in the afternoon at an early hour. In the mornings she would get out of the soft feather bed "neck and neck" with her husband. She would make a fire in the kitchen fireplace, put on the corn-dodgers, and while they were cooking would go to the spring-house for the milk and butter. She was happy, had plenty, loved her neighbors, and attended to her own little world—home.

Her husband, "Little Davy," was about five feet tall, light and withey. He spent most of his time in "the diggin's," leaving home about three in the morning, and returning about the middle of the afternoon. If he struck a lead of metal that

paid well it was all right, or if he worked and did not take out a pound of lead, that was all right too. He always had a good "prospect" ahead.

He paid little attention to the farm, leaving the field and truck patch to Aunt Patsy and their son Joe. But "Long Joe," as he was commonly called, had a "hankerin' for fishin', swimmin', and huntin'," and passed many of the summer days along the creek with a small, long pawpaw fishing-pole in his hand, or in the autumn would keep the family well supplied with fresh squirrels, and in the winter would add wild turkeys, venison, rabbits, and 'possums to the bill of fare. Long Joe was a good shot, and could "plump" a squirrel's head without trouble.

Up the creek and opposite Aunt Patsy's home were the Pauls. James Paul, called "Apostle Paul," on account of his size and dignity and long beard, was the father of "fat Sis" referred to in a preceding chapter. His house consisted of several large, long rooms, with a porch between each room, and a large fireplace in each. As his family increased he would add other rooms for their accommodation, and in this way the size of his family regulated the size of his house until it consisted of seven rooms all strung out in a row with porches between each one.

One of them was set aside for drying beans, pumpkins, and tobacco. His wife, Jane, did all her cooking over the fireplace, and the best dodgers that Pennix ever ate were served by her. Once she gave him a piece of hoe-cake made out of

the meal grated off a roasting-ear and spread with fresh butter, which, served with cool, sweet milk, was a delicacy which so pleased him that he wished he had the capacity of an elephant.

There was "Uncle Battle" Harrison, a typical representative of the Southern gentleman. Within his home dwelt comfort, elegance, and ease. He entertained his equals with a lavish hand, gave freely to charity, and helped the poor, whether they were black or white. He was tall, strong, wore long hair, and was as swarthy as an Indian.

There were two things of note connected with his plantation: one was a large grove of hard maple trees, where they made barrels of maple syrup and maple sugar every February, and the other was the large number of cats that were found everywhere around the place. Their son Tom said there were over a hundred cats about. This same Tom had a fancy for them, and would go miles for an old cat or a nest of kittens.

On the Meramec, not many miles from the home of Pennix, lived a few families who were prominent in State affairs. His grand-parents lived there, and to their home the boy delighted to go visiting. Here were colored folks in plenty, and they remained with their former masters, priding themselves on belonging to a good family, and taking his name after they were set free. When the freedmen were not satisfied with the name of their former master or if there were anything dishonorable in it, they would take one to their liking. Few darkies would court and wed another whose master was of

less culture and wealth than their own, for of course their social position was largely determined by the status of the family to which they had belonged.

In those good old days nearly every family was provided with a loom for weaving purposes, and a spinning-wheel. The women spun the cotton, wool, and flax into thread; wove the thread into cloth, and made all the clothing for the family—cotton and linen for summer, and woollen goods for winter wear. Pennix got two new suits each fall—a brown suit for every day and a blue suit for Sundays. The women wore cotton or linen clothing for summer and linsey-woolsey for winter. Everything needed for the table, except coffee and "store" sugar and a few other groceries, was raised on the farm. In fact the farm produced nearly everything that went into the household economy. The women-folks at Pennix's home would take roll after roll of wool and spin broach after broach; the old spinning-wheel sang as it spun; the spinner, taking the thread in one hand and turning the wheel with the other, would keep time with the hum of the wheel with her own song, as she walked back and forth. The women were happy those days, though their "wheel" was the spinning-wheel. Some few families in each neighborhood made a specialty of spinning and weaving, and among the best was Ann Cupboard of "Pill Cabin" fame.

Ducks and geese furnished feathers for the beds, and each housewife took pride in the size and

quality of her feather-beds and pillows, as well as in the number, quality, and variety of her quilts and home-made knit socks.

In addition to providing raiment for the household, the women would milk the cows, strain the milk, and put it away in the spring-house, do the churning, cooking, mending and patching, tend the garden, often drop the corn in the field, carry the water, do the family washing and ironing, piece and weave the rag-carpets, bring in the wood, and in extreme cases would go to the woods and bring in a load of sticks with which to cook a meal, or chop up enough, if there was any at the wood pile, needed for their purpose.

They had entire management of the fowls in the barnyard, and would often raise more than a thousand chickens in one season. Yet they had time to visit and entertain, go to Sunday-school and church, quilting-bees, house-raisings, corn-huskings, apple-peelings, peach-parings, cake-parties, fish-frys, weddings, and butcherings.

In harvest-time women and men would often exchange labor with their neighbors, and in that way the wheat was garnered with little expense. At such times each woman would try to excel in good cooking. The chickens, pies, biscuits, corn-dodgers, fruit-cobblers, sweet milk and buttermilk right out of the bottom of the spring-house, and coffee for the men and store tea for the women would render the harvest-time a season of good living and social enjoyment.

A good luncheon was served in the middle of the

forenoon and one in the afternoon. Sometimes there would be a jug where one could quaff of the elixir of youth, but Pennix never saw a drunken man during the lifetime of his father, although a good quality of whisky was kept in almost every house.

The young people usually traveled on horseback, the women wearing riding-skirts that almost swept the ground. Many of them were expert horsewomen, and a challenge to run a race was seldom declined. Of course they took pride in a beautiful, high-strung steed. The girls were famous for their beauty, modesty, industry and good health.

The sheep, of course, furnished the wool, which after being sheared off their backs was washed in the creek, taken to a carding-mill, cleaned, and spun into rolls. Then the women took them, spun them into threads, wove the threads into cloth, and cut the cloth into whatever garments they desired. Sometimes they would use hand-carders, which would save a trip to the carding-mills, which were often located at great distances.

Cotton, after being picked from the boll, was "seeded"; that is, run through a gin-mill in order to separate the fiber from the seed. The gin-mills usually used were hand-mills, and the cotton would go through between two rollers and the seeds would drop down on the side where the feeding was done. It took two to do this work, as there were two roller-cranks to turn. At Pennix's home this task was allotted to himself and John. When "seeded" the fiber was handled in every respect as wool was.

Flax was beaten out in the barn on the hard floor with a limber-jointed concern that would come down and whack Pennix on the head if he tried to use it. This flax-beater was called a "flail," but as the work was too heavy for Pennix he obtained but a poor knowledge of the preparation of the fiber for the linen goods that was prepared for him every summer.

It was within the walls of old Liberty Church that Pennix was baptized. It was here that most of the young people were given in marriage, for be it remembered that in those days marriage was looked upon as a divine institution and not as a civil contract to be set aside at the pleasure of either party; it was here that the big religious revivals were held; that Pennix learned about all the Scripture that he ever knew, and the moral and religious training instilled into his youthful mind, when at the Sunday-school and the meetings, was of inestimable service to him in years to come; here that his father prayed and his mother wept, in the divine gladness of her heart, and it was here that the funeral services were held over the body of Pennix's father before he was laid to rest out where the night winds blow.

The church was built "long afo' de wah," of huge and heavy logs, which were hewn flat on two sides, and the cracks between were chinked and "pointed" with lime. Its clapboard roof had been many times replaced. Its stone chimney was an immense structure, and the fireplace occupied about six feet in the center of the back end of the building, which was about forty by sixty feet. It contained nine win-

dows, each window having twelve panes of glass ten inches square.

The church was ceiled with planed lumber. Only one aisle had been provided for, and it was in the middle of the house, extending from the door to the pulpit. The benches were made out of heavy planed lumber and were provided with back supports, and reached from the aisle to the walls. The women sat on one side and the men on the other, while a few back seats were reserved for the colored population. The pulpit, high and wide, with a window on each side, was located near the corner of the house. In front of the pulpit was the "mourners' bench." Here worshiped the Methodists, many of whom were of the shouting kind. This was the only church in that part of the country. Nearly all the people were Methodists, and so deeply did the feeling of piety prevail that when a grown man or woman did not attend the church the omission called for united work on the part of the members.

No "Fed" or "Reb" desecrated the church during the war, as there seemed to be something that stayed the fire-brand.

Pennix's father, "Uncle Ben," was a devout Christian, and almost a lifelong member of the Methodist church. When his funeral occurred at old Liberty Church the entire country, it appeared, turned out to do honor to the memory of a plain and honest man, and the Bishop came from a long way off to preach the funeral sermon.

It is well here to note the fact that while other homes were laid waste during the war, others abused,

insulted and shot, "Uncle Ben" was spared in all these respects. There must have been a cause, for neither faction ever molested, threatened, or harmed him, except in foraging for supplies.

The secret of the whole thing, in Pennix's opinion, was due to the years of assistance and hospitality that he had bestowed on others. No man was ever in distress or in need but "Uncle Ben" sought out the distress and relieved it so far as he could. His good works were known for miles and miles around, and when the dogs of war were turned loose there were present those who would intercept any attempt to harm his gray head.

People of the day have no adequate conception of the open-handed hospitality that marked the relations among the Ozarkers a half century ago. Strangers and acquaintances were alike welcome to break bread at the table, and the invitation "stay until after dinner" or "stay all night" was always tendered and its acceptance urged.

Bucketfuls of milk, with now and then a roll of butter, were given away to the black man or to the white man alike, and eggs and chickens were to be had without money. Throughout the summer and fall seasons loads of apples were hauled out of the big orchard, free for the "picking." Sorghum and even maple syrup were often given away to the less fortunate neighbors. "Uncle Ben" had been blessed with plenty and he used his means for the good of his fellow-men.

A cow was often given to a poor family whose children needed milk; a horse or team loaned to a

neighbor whose farm-work had been stopped by the untimely accident or death of his own horse; a few days' work in helping some one to save his wheat crop or in plowing out a cornfield; a load of wood to a sick neighbor—all these are but modest illustrations of his conception of charity and brotherly love.

Pennix's home during the revivals and quarterly meetings was the rendezvous of many of the visiting brethren and sisters. Pennix did not enjoy these occasions quite as well as the visitors seemed to, for there were too many horses for him to feed, and dinner was often late. In the summer-time he invariably had to "wait" and keep the flies off the table. It seemed to him that they never got through, while the chickens and gravy nearly disappeared during the first round. The pies and sweet cakes, jam and jelly vanished much quicker than the guests. Pennix watched these goodies with anxious forebodings as he kept his leafy peach limb swinging over one end of the table and his brother John a-hitting at the flies at the other. Of course, if any of the guests got hit it was purely an accident, but accidents of this sort were quite frequent. Once, however, when a little fat preacher by the name of "Brother Tub" was taking the last gizzard out of the chicken dish just as a fly had lit on the rim of the dish, Pennix aimed a lick at the fly; but he missed the fly and knocked the gizzard off of Brother Tub's fork. Brother Tub, being accustomed to good society, and therefore not easily abashed, quietly and calmly picked the gizzard up,

then lying on the spotless linen, and with equal composure proceeded to make away with it.

As it was nothing unusual to entertain thirty or forty guests at dinner on a big church day, and as dinner was at three o'clock in the afternoon, having to wait and keep off the flies was not a very pleasant experience to a hungry boy.

Each fall a big camp-meeting was held in the grove at old Liberty Church. A vast arbor was erected in the forest, and when the weather was good the services were held under it; but in case of a storm the worship was conducted within the church building.

Prior to its commencement, however, the members of the church, individually and collectively, would pray with great zeal, devotion, and faith for a great revival of religion. They would also make due preparations for administering to the wants of the inner man. Pennix attended these camp-meetings, and heard the richest outpourings of the gospel, in which grace was described as an ever-flowing, inexhaustible fountain wherein the vilest sinner had only to take a plunge and have all his sins washed away and become as a little child.

The vast multitude of the people swayed and was moved by the power of gospel and the eloquence of a great preacher as the tide is influenced by the moon. The visitations of the Holy Ghost swept over the community like a vast tidal wave, and swept every sinner into the ark of the covenant. The women shouted until exhausted. One old lady, who had not walked for years without her crutches,

jumped up one night and went shouting around the mourners' bench to the awe and consternation of the congregation. Hallelujahs and hosannas broke forth, wending their way up until lost in the blue abyss above, or perchance rolled on to the very gates of the New Jerusalem.

Everything was offered to the man and woman, even the abhorrence of sin, if they would partake of the waters of life, which waters would place those whose deeds may have been dark and whose characters may have been questionable, right before their fellow-men and justified in the sight of God. This water of life would remove the inclination to sin and fill their hearts with divine love, good will and joy. Riches on earth and treasures in heaven would be their reward.

While the offers of grace, if accepted, brought earthly and eternal blessings, the rejection of the divine spirit when knocking at the portals of a sinner's heart was sure to bring damnation. The preachers in those days did not mince words when they preached, but pictured hell to be a place where the sinner would have an everlasting swim in a sea of hissing, seething, erupting, melted matter.

The sermons preached by the elderly ministers were strong, and became more luminous as they reached the closing sentences. Once a minister, but a stranger, and a young man, described his idea of hell, and the picture, *though reduced in temperature*, was more dreadful than the *one seven times heated*. With fine imagery and elegant sentences he pictured all interplanetary space as filled with

lost souls, each unconscious of the presence of others and nowhere to light or rest, but moving on and on forever through the blackness and darkness of infinitude. Each man, woman, and child would be clothed in a black somber gown and have full consciousness; that is, have full possession of the five senses with superhuman activity of the mental faculties.

This sermon made a profound impression on the congregation. The deacons decided that they did not want him to preach for them any more. They argued that such doctrines not only contradicted the plain teaching of the Scriptures, but presented a future life much worse than the one they held in view. To Pennix, the thought of having no place to stop and rest, but just keep going on and on and all alone in his endless voyage through space was so terrible that he almost wished that he was never born or that he could get converted and stay converted all his life. Another sermon like this would have brought Pennix to the mourners' bench, for, above all things, he hated to be alone, and dreaded the thought of having no place to rest, but just keep on going, like dropping corn by hand when one gets to the end of the row and has to turn back on the next one. No stop, no rest, unless one gets a chance to bury the seed corn and some one who is a judge of it has to go to the crib to get more.

"Horror of horrors!" was the conclusion of Pennix.

Pennix much preferred "Uncle Sealum's" ser-

mons, that were closed in about the following manner:

"If you make your bed in hell, remember that the blood won't rest on our shoulders. If you wake up in the morning and find your bed in hell and call for a cup of cool water to cool your parched tongue, and the fiery old devil pours melted lava down your throat, you will then think of your opportunity here to-night, but it will then be too late.

"Come now and go with us to the better world, where there will be no more parting; no more weeping; where your friends have gone on before you. Some of you have mothers, sisters, fathers, yea, children, there. Come and go with us to the better world and walk with us the streets of the New Jerusalem."

The singing formed an important and inspiring feature of the camp-meeting. There were no choirs or organs or bands in those days; but the entire congregation would sing with all the enthusiasm of zealots, and with strong voices that made the welkin ring. It was no uncommon thing to hear the singing two or three miles away, echoing and reverberating down the valleys. These old songs are now forgotten and find no place among the choirs of to-day, but Pennix has one of the old song-books used in Liberty Church, a priceless gift from his mother, and the following are two of the favorites.

This one was sung first:

OUT OF THE OZARKS

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

"Day of Judgment, Day of Wonders!
Hark! The trumpet's awful sound,
Louder than a thousand thunders,
Shakes the vast creation round;
How the summons will the sinners' hearts confound!

"At the call the dead awaken,
Rise to earth from sea and land,
And the chosen shall be taken.
Careless sinner, prepare to flee;
What will then become of thee?

"Horror past imagination
Will surprise your trembling heart
When you hear your condemnation,
'Go, accursed wretch, depart!
Hence with Satan and his angels have your part.'

"But to those who have religion
He will say, 'Come near, you blessed,
See the kingdom I bestow;
You forever shall my love and glory know,
Your sighs shall be changed to praise
When the world is in a blaze.'"

This song was considered one of the most beautiful of that time, and while the sentiment may not be appreciated or fully understood when seen in cold type, yet Pennix found it was the most beautiful song that he ever heard a congregation sing, and no man or woman could listen unmoved as it was sung by those two or three thousand people of God under the arbor at old Liberty Church. The tune was one easily sung, a joyous and inspiring one. It was a favorite among the darkies, who were always present in great numbers.

This is the second:

OUT OF THE OZARKS

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THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

"Oh, Thou in whose presence my soul takes delight,
On Whom in affliction I call;
My comfort by day and my song in the night,
My hope, my salvation, my all;

"Where dost Thou at noon-tide resort with thy sheep
To feed on the pastures of Love?
And why in the Valley of Death should I weep,
Or alone in the wilderness rove?

"The roses of Sharon, the lilies that grow
In the vales, on the banks of the streams,
On his cheeks in the beauty of excellence glow,
And his eyes are as quivers of beams.

"His voice, as the sound of the dulcimer sweet,
Is heard through the shadows of death;
The cedars of Lebanon bow at his feet,
The air is perfumed with his breath.

"His lips as a fountain of righteousness flow
That water the garden of grace;
From which their salvation the Gentiles shall know
And bask in the smiles of his face.

"Love sits on His eyelids and scatters delight
Through all the bright mansions on high,
Their faces the cherubim veil in His sight
And tremble with fulness of joy.

"He looks, and ten thousands of angels rejoice,
And myriads wait for His word;
He speaks, and Eternity is filled with His voice,
Re-echoes the praise of her Lord."

CHAPTER IX

SUMMER came with a bountiful harvest, but the laborers were scarce. Pennix's father, while working in the field, being prostrated with the heat, reeled and fell across the cradle with which he was reaping the grain. He was assisted to the house, and in a few days was able to walk short distances, but not able to work. While yet feeble but improving, he decided to make a visit to his daughter, who lived in the valley of the Bourbeuse, some twenty miles away. Why he made the trip will never be known, but possibly he saw that the days he had to live were few, and he may have had a message for her. However, he went, and suffered a relapse from which he never recovered. The best care and the best medical skill that could be procured in the State were employed, but these did not do much good.

Pennix learned that his father's greatest grief, when knowing that death was only a question of a short time, was an anxiety for the future welfare of his little boys. He would often say to those around him:

"I am not afraid to die, but I hate to leave my family and my boys. What will become of them? They are so young and so wayward. They are not like other boys, and will make good men or bad

men. All will depend on their training. If I only knew that they would make good men I would be resigned to die." Then he would weep and pray and say, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done!"

Pennix and John went out to see him often during his sickness, which lasted nearly two years, and he would take his boys in his lap or have them lie down with him on the bed, and he would then talk and weep, and caress them.

The last time Pennix went to see him his father was very weak, and his eyes were dim. He took his father's hand and laid it on his head, and a faint smile and a moisture in the eye revealed that a father's love is the last thought he has on earth. His feet grew cold, and then his hands, so wrinkled and thin. The lips moved and seemed to tremble; eager ears bent low and close to hear the parting words. But no light or love came in return; the spirit had flown—and Pennix was fatherless.

Pennix's brother Charles had left the old home several years prior to this time, and only an occasional letter told of his whereabouts and doings. It had now been nearly a year since his mother had heard from her oldest son—a long time to keep a mother's heart in anxiety. One autumn afternoon a boy was seen coming down the lane. All eyes were turned toward him as he rode rapidly along the gravelly road and up to the gate.

"Hello!" he called.

Some one went down to where he sat on his jaded and sweating horse. He asked if Mrs. — lived there. On being answered in the affirmative,

he handed over a telegram, which was opened with trembling hands, and a cry of anguish went up as these words appeared on the message:

"In Barnum's circus ring to-day I met with a dislocation of the femur bone. I will not be able to walk for a long time. Send for me.

"CHARLES."

The message in reply told the sufferer that some one would come at once to bring him home. That very day a neighbor volunteered his services, and three days later they were met at the station in a spring wagon and Charles was carefully taken home. He kept his bed for months, and then walked on crutches. He never fully recovered, but in later years experienced little inconvenience and no pain from the old dislocation.

Charles was an athlete of almost national fame. When a boy he would travel long distances through the forest by jumping from limb to limb like a squirrel, and had he not met with this accident he would probably have eclipsed the world's record as an acrobat and tumbler. But this was not his most wonderful talent. He possessed, by all odds, the sweetest voice that Pennix ever heard in song. But like many others especially endowed in some particular way, he never used his splendid gift for his own advancement or the betterment of mankind. After this accident he was broken-hearted, and at last was one of the lost in the recent Galveston flood.

Laura, Pennix's sister, having married, she and her husband moved into the old homestead and lived there pending the settlement of the father's estate and the division of the property among the lawyers, the court, doctors, nurses, store-keepers, and the heirs.

The day of public sale arrived, and hundreds of people came from distances near and remote to procure bargains. Pennix saw one by one of his favorite horses and colts knocked off to the highest bidder. Old Rose and Jenny were not sold according to their swimming qualities, but according to their ages, and therefore sold cheap. All the household goods, except personal effects, were practically given away. The "dinghills" were sold at scrub-chicken prices, the large Southdown sheep went at a price that ought to make the buyer blush to look them in the face; the famous Chester Whites being off on the range eating acorns, the "chance" on them was sold for a song, and the cattle were bought in at the own sweet price of the buyers. Last offered for sale was the dear old farm, and as only one man seemed to want it or thought himself able to purchase, it was immediately knocked off to him at his first and last bid, two thousand dollars. Three hundred acres of land as fertile as can be found in the Mississippi Valley, and the most delightful and picturesque home that existed beneath the stars sold for about one-tenth of its true value!

Pennix's mother decided that she and her two boys would spend the summer in Sangamon County,

Illinois, where she would determine whether to remain in the "Sucker" State or return to Missouri.

With eyes dimmed by tears and hearts filled with anguish, they bade farewell to their old home, where so many years of happy life had passed. There were handshakings, kisses, and farewells along the road, and many of the old neighbors cried as if their hearts would break.

It was the first ride behind the steam horse that Pennix and John had enjoyed, and it was intensely exciting to feel the jostle of the train and to sit by the window and see the surrounding world moving by. St. Louis was reached on time, and a bus conveyed the trio to the Leland Hotel, where the night was passed. Next morning their mother gave her two sons a dollar apiece and told them to go out and buy whatever they wanted. Pennix ran on to a fruit market and invested his dollar in paw-paws, while John invested his in a brass locket which had a yard of yellow chain. Next morning the bus conveyed them aboard the ferry-boat and across the Mississippi to the Illinois side. Here they boarded the train for Chatham. From there they were conveyed by a carriage across the prairies to the home of Pennix's sister.

The widowed mother and her boys were cordially received, and within a few days it was decided that Pennix, being too young to do farm work according to the system of farming in vogue there, should go to school, and his brother could work.

Accordingly, on a Monday morning Pennix

started out alone, across fields and through lanes, for the schoolhouse. He wore his best suit of Sunday jeans, and felt quite well dressed, and confident that he would make a good impression on the young "Suckers," and have the same respect shown him here as he was accustomed to in Missouri.

The schoolhouse was different from the ones that he was familiar with in the Ozarks. The building was of frame instead of logs, and had a stove instead of a fireplace. The windows were larger, and the room was so full of light that Pennix had no trouble to "keep his place." Instead of long benches there were seats so short that only two or three could get in one of them at once, but there were so many seats that all appeared to have a place to sit down, and instead of holding the book in the hand he could place it on the desk in front of him and see how to read, or by running his finger along the line as he read he would not lose his place.

There was a great big round thing, with streaks, lines, and colors on the teacher's bench, and Pennix wondered what it was and what was on the inside of it.

The boys and girls looked different from the school children that Pennix knew in the Ozarks. Some of the boys wore collars, and all seemed to have on store clothes. The girls too seemed to have put away their linsey dresses, and had on their linen and calico, although it was too early in the season to put on summer clothes. They appeared to Pennix as being a cleaner set of scholars than

the Ozarkers, but were not so fat, strong, and healthy looking. Pennix forgot "Rule 8" of the Pill Cabin, so intent was he on "taking in the sights." It seemed that all the little "Suckers" were looking by quick flickering glances at Pennix, and he would look back at them in the same way. He noticed that they would look at him and then look at some one else and smile. Pennix did not like that. One pretty little girl who sat opposite to Pennix kept looking at him, and finally she made a face at Pennix, who in reply smacked his lips at her, which broke her of making faces at him. The teacher gave Pennix *a something* she called an examination, and then put him in with some others to recite his lessons, instead of letting him do it by himself. Pennix was not treated with the respect to which he had been accustomed. Back in the Ozarks he was looked up to, and generally his way was the way that went, but here they not only seemed to question his authority but to look upon him as an inferior.

At the first recess the boys asked Pennix where he came from, where he got his clothes, what his name was, and a hundred other questions. One of them asked if the girls dressed that way back in the Ozarks. This sally made them all laugh. A fat, sleek, saucy-looking urchin knocked Pennix's bread and butter out of his hands, and as Pennix went to pick it up the urchin stepped on it. A shuffle ensued. As Pennix did not want to fight and "get the school down on him" he got the worst of it. He threatened his opponent with the teacher,

which threat made all of them exclaim, "Mesouri! Mesouri!" This made Pennix so mad that he went in and laid his complaint before the throne of the school *marm*, who paid no attention to him. Pennix then sat down in his seat and remained there until "books." At noon the little "Suckers" would cry after him, "Tattle, tattle-tale!"

Pennix retorted by calling them "Suckers." This brought on a scrap, and Pennix got the worst of it. He then went back to the teacher and asked her to follow Solomon's instructions, but the frail young thing began to cry.

"I can't do anything with them," she said; "they won't mind me. I guess they won't hurt you much if you don't bother them."

Pennix then went back to the play-ground, fully aroused and determined to defend himself. He was not quarrelsome, but took pride in running a race or in wrestling; furthermore, he always tried to make friends with those he came in contact with. It was natural for him to be friendly, but when aroused he fought and fought hard, crying as he fought. At such times he became almost insane with rage, and could not be persuaded or controlled.

The school-boys now began to "guy" Pennix, and again called him "tattle-tale," which aroused Pennix's "dander," and he retorted with "Suckers and hounds." Each one now seemed anxious to try the young "Ozarker" a round, and gathering around him began to make passes and dodges. Pennix was not used to that way of scrapping. He

always clinched and then tried to down his adversary.

A large young man then came up, saying, "Only one at a time."

So they picked out one, a boy named Tim Wheat, who lived in Springfield, but who attended that country school every summer for a number of years. He came sparring, dodging, squatting, and jumping around, and pretty soon made a pass and hit Pennix a stinging blow on the nose. Pennix made a lunge at Tim and had him on the ground in a jiffy. The referee then made Pennix get up and go at it according to the rules of the Sucker State. Pennix was much the stronger of the two and the best winded, but their way of fighting was not his way. There was some more squatting and dodging around, to the great annoyance of Pennix, for he did not know what would happen next. He finally told Tim to "clinch" and have it over with. Pennix called him a coward, and about that time he got another swat on the nose that caused the blood to flow. Pennix was now in severe pain, and, bursting into a frenzy of yells, he sprang for Tim, who took off through the woods. Pennix soon overtook him, and had him down pulling his hair when the relief took him off. That settled that scrap.

At recess in the afternoon one of the boys called Pennix a liar. Pennix had him licked according to the rules of the Ozarkers before the big referee could get his "Sucker" rules into operation.

When Pennix went home that afternoon he told

his brother-in-law that he did not want to go to that school any more, as the boys were all against him.

"Well, you lick half a dozen of them, and they will behave after that. It is something new and strange for them to have an Ozark kid in school."

"Well," said Pennix, "I licked one, and if I had not got my nose hurt I would have licked another."

Pennix was then patted on the back and told to lay them out.

Next morning when he got to school they began on him again by calling him names, and he flew into a rage, grabbed a club, laid two of them out and dared the crowd, getting off that old Ozark banter:

"I dare you; I double dare you, and whoever would take a dare would steal a sheep and eat the hair!"

This kind of a dare back in the Ozarks meant a fight. Pennix advanced toward the crowd, crying with rage and daring them to fight. The crowd gathered together and moved in a body slowly toward the schoolhouse. Pennix kept advancing, swinging his club, crying fiercely and daring them to tackle him. The crowd climbed the fence and gathered on the shady side of the schoolhouse, but Pennix remained outside the yard, club in hand, and kept looking at them through the cracks in the fence. When the school bell rang they all went in, and Pennix slowly followed.

He sat down in his seat, but did not pick up his books to study; he kept his eyes on the boys, and every time he caught the eye of one looking at him

he would champ his mouth like a mad dog, and look daggers at him.

On going out on the playground at recess some one suggested that they play "dare base," which was one of Pennix's favorite games. Pennix did not believe that they would let him play with them; but when Breck Crane, who had the first choice, chose Pennix the very first one, his cup of joy was full at the unexpected honor. Pennix had now established his worthiness to be recognized by the young bloods of Illinois, and there was no more fighting required at his hands. They respected him and ever afterward treated him as their equal, and in some instances, where prowess or cunning was required, were guided by Pennix's judgment and appreciated his services.

Pennix formed there some of the friendships that lasted to the present day, and no doubt will endure as long as his life. A more sociable or generous group of boys could not be found anywhere, and just as soon as their respect and friendship were won they became friends through thick and thin. Pennix soon fell into the easy ways of the school, and like the other boys procured a rubber with which to kill flies that lit on his desk, and so expert did he become in the use of the rubber string that he would often kill two flies with one shot. The noon hour was usually passed in the surrounding woods, and often they would return late; but no questions were asked, as the teacher would no doubt rather have them out of the school than in.

One summer morning Pennix and his friend

Charley Hodge were sauntering leisurely through a pasture on their way to school, when they ran across an old water trough which was located at a well. There was a hatchet at the well, and as the trough was rotten and soft, Pennix chopped it to pieces. After school had taken in the owner of the trough came into the schoolhouse and informed the teacher that some of the scholars had destroyed his water trough. The teacher made several inquiries, but none of the boys seemed to know that there was such a trough. After some more inquiry on the part of the teacher, circumstantial evidence placed the wanton act upon one Johnny Long, and the teacher began to deal out merited punishment. Just then Pennix lifted his hand, and as soon as the teacher's attention was arrested, he arose and told her that it was he that had cut up the trough and not Johnny.

The teacher then got ready to punish Pennix, when the owner of the trough, Mr. Shepherd, interceded.

"Miss," he said, "I must ask you not to punish that boy. The trough was old and not worth much, and the only reason that I came here to find out about the trough was to avoid anything like that in the future, and to show the one who chopped the trough that he should not do such things. I honor this boy for his truthfulness and courage. He could have gotten out of it, as he was not even under suspicion, and he owned up to it in order to save a little boy from getting a whipping for something that he had not done. So let the matter drop

and I will put in a new trough." With these words he said good-by and left the room.

Never before or since did Pennix listen to words that had such a strange effect. He had destroyed the man's stock trough, yet he pleaded with the teacher not to punish the lad, because he owned up to it.

Pennix often had in his dear old home in the Ozarks escaped parental punishment by telling the truth, but he never dreamed that such a code of procedure could find favor anywhere else, especially in school, and he laid his head on the desk and wept.

CHAPTER X

IN early fall Pennix's mother took her two boys and returned to old Missouri, settling in a village called Dry Branch, near where Uncle Peyton and Aunt 'Becca lived.

This village is now known on the map as Morrellton, having had its name changed several times—Morrellton, née Anaconda; Anaconda, née Forked Ridge; Forked Ridge, née Dry Branch. It is located about fifty miles east of the old home in the Ozarks and among the foot hills of the eastern slope.

Here the family rented a log cabin in the town and bought forty acres of wild land near the village, on which they erected a log cabin with a stone chimney. The house consisted of one room fourteen by sixteen feet with a low sleeping-room upstairs under the clapboard roof. The house when completed cost about one hundred dollars, but it should not have been over half that amount.

The land cost about ten dollars per acre, but was not worth half that price according to values at that time.

The land was not surveyed, and the good bottom-land, which was represented as being on and a part of the forty, belonged to another tract. The cabin was at last ready for occupancy, and Pennix, his brother and mother moved in. A team of old

horses, chain harness, and wagon were bought, and the work among the grubs, rocks, and trees began. The team soon afterward came to grief, the wagon was wrecked beyond repair; only the chain harness survived.

Pennix's mother had sufficient money to run her through the winter, but spring-time found her at bed-rock and with no income. During the winter the two boys attended the free school for about three months, which was held by an old-fashioned teacher in an old building which had been erected for a church.

There were two classes in arithmetic, both studying Ray's Third Part. They commenced at the beginning, and Pennix's class advanced as far as the rule for long division, where it stopped; the other class got as far as the multiplication table. The rule for long division and the mode of recitation were the earliest things along the line of work in arithmetic that Pennix ever recalled to memory. The class put in about the last month of school on that rule, as all had to learn it before any could pass on, and some were so stupid that they never did learn it at that term of school.

When the class was called, one at a time, the pupil who was called on to recite would commence to chirp the rule, or as much of it as he knew, just as soon as he started from his seat, and while repeating the rule he would go to a certain spot on the floor, halt, wheel, face-about, but made no halt in saying the rule from the time he left the seat until he had said all of it that he knew. Then he

or she, as the case might be, would remain in line until all had done likewise.

The schools in those days never stopped for Christmas, not even for Christmas Day. A treat was usually expected and given, but in this case the most hopeful shook their heads and scarcely expressed an opinion. But the day before Christmas the large boys made up their minds that the teacher should follow the time-honored custom of "Pleasant Ridge." But the teacher, it seemed, by the developments of future events, made up his mind that he would not be governed by what his predecessors had done.

Anticipating an exciting time, the boys and girls were in the schoolhouse about daylight, with sentinels stationed at the windows and doors. When a belated pupil arrived he was let in. The teacher was there a full half hour ahead of his regular time, but the "Temple of Learning" where he had been monarch of all he surveyed was closed and barricaded against him. He demanded admission, but was refused unless he would "treat," which he refused to do, and again he was told that he could not get in. He then went to the fence and got a heavy rail, which he used like the Romans of old, and at the first batter he fairly pulverized the frame door, and walked triumphantly in and began to "shed his linen."

A free-for-all fight now ensued. The teacher had hired some of the large boys to help him out in case of an emergency. These young traitors were not so much influenced to take the teacher's

part by any disposition on their part to be on the teacher's side, but to even up some old grudge that they held against some one on the other side.

As the *mêlée* went merrily on, benches were upset, the desks were overturned, and a heavy collision knocked down the stove and about forty rods, more or less, of stove-pipe. The belligerents and neutrals were deluged with soot, rust and dust, the accumulation of ages. A thick somber cloud settled around, getting in the eyes, nose and mouth, while low heavy thuds, coughing, and various other sounds reached the ears. Pennix got on top of a high bench in the corner, where he could see the merry-go-round to best advantage.

As soon as the stove had its center of gravity disturbed, most all of the scholars who could find their way out, or had no previous engagement, took a speedy departure for home. After a short time all had departed but the teacher, who remained behind to fix up the house for next day's session, which went on as if nothing had happened, and included the rule for long division.

In early spring John commenced to work for a farmer at ten dollars a month, to be paid in live stock and provisions. Pennix and his mother were to run the farm, which contained about two acres of land to be plowed and planted with corn and garden produce. A man was hired to hold the plow and Pennix did the driving, and in about a week or ten days the corn had been planted and the garden put in good condition.

After the crop had been laid by, and the garden

was all hoed, Pennix's mother thought that she could spare him so he could attend a short summer subscription school then operating in Dry Branch; but he had attended scarcely a week when he had an altercation with the teacher or preacher, whichever he was, for he was equally good at either, and followed both callings for a livelihood. The misunderstanding came about in this way:

Pennix and Tim Hill were competing for the "headmark" in the spelling class. Tim was the head of the class and Pennix was second. Tim was about two years older than Pennix, much taller, but no stronger. Each had boasted that he would get the headmark. The rule as laid down by the teacher allowed but one trial. Tim spelled lethargy "leathergy"; but just as he put the letter *a* in the first syllable, Pennix began spelling the word, and Tim seeing his mistake corrected himself, and both finished the word together. Pennix waited a moment for the teacher to say "Go up," but he was silent. Tim squared himself in the corner and would not go down. Pennix then seized him by his coat collar, put his foot against the wall of the schoolhouse, gave him a jerk that sent him down, and Pennix went into the vacant corner. Tim came back at Pennix, and they both soon left the corner and were rolling and tumbling under the benches, each one trying to give the other the "headmark." The subscription teacher-preacher came over to the scene of activity and directed the two competitors for the headmark to take their books and go home.

Tim went back to school the next morning, but Pennix took the hoe and went out into the two-acre field and commenced cutting sprouts and weeding the corn.

Early one bright spring morning the neighborhood was thrown into a fever of excitement on account of a railroad wreck that had occurred just below the village. Two passenger trains on the "Frisco" had collided, and everybody in the neighborhood hastened to the scene of the disaster. When Pennix turned the curve he beheld two big engines locked in cold embrace, with their wrecked cowcatchers pointing toward the zenith and the engines resting on their cabs. The battered and flattened machinery, particularly the wheels, were interwoven, and marked the blunder of some one.

"What caused the wreck?" every one would ask, and Uncle Andy would reply:

"'Speck the track was too narrow for them to pass."

Sixty-three killed and crippled was the result of this catastrophe. The coaches were scattered through the timber, having rolled off the bank at that sharp curve in the track. The groans of the wounded and the lamentations of the others were heart-rending. Women and men wept as they worked; but not all could take a hand, for many women and children had to leave the scene immediately.

Whisky, different kinds of herb and root medicines were freely administered, while many of the women tore off strips of their dresses and used their

aprons to make bandages with which to tie up the bleeding and broken limbs. One family living near the scene of the wreck gave every sheet, pillow case, and piece of white cloth in the house as bandages for the maimed passengers.

Pennix went inside one coach that had been wrecked against some oak trees, but he saw so many dead that the scene made him turn sick and pale.

A shrill whistle was heard above the confusion. A train appeared around the curve. Men carrying handbags and wearing white shirts and high hats jumped from the train before it had stopped, and were soon wrapping limbs and saving the lives of as many as they could. The wounded passengers were then carried to the train. The bell rang, the whistle blew, and the train disappeared in the direction of St. Louis. Within less than an hour another train came and conveyed the dead away in the same direction.

The next Sunday afternoon Pennix returned to the scene of the disaster, but scarcely a sign of the wreckage was visible. The wreck had been cleared, the débris cleared away, and trains sped by as if that had never been the site of human woe and anguish.

Meanwhile, the area of cultivated land was increased year by year, affording Pennix and his mother about all the work that they could do, for the sprouts and weeds grew amazingly fast amid the rocks, stumps, roots and grubs. John worked out by the month, coming home every Saturday

night, and frequently bringing a side of bacon from the farm where he worked, or some coffee and sugar from the village store. He would remain until Sunday afternoon, returning in time to do the chores. They all now realized that life was earnest, a hand-to-hand contest for bread. Pennix and his brother now plainly saw that the joy and fun of their earlier years had passed away forever, and that henceforth they must apply their energies in fighting the wolf from their door. At times the prospect was dismal, but they were gaining each year in strength and working capacity.

Schools were no longer attended; it was a struggle now to subdue the woodland wilderness and prepare a farm whereupon a livelihood could be made. Pennix's mother, though over fifty years of age, worked nearly every day in the field when putting in the corn or working in the garden. She seemed happy amid her toil, and it was a pleasure for her to carry a basket of eggs to the village store and bring back some article of wearing apparel for one of "her boys."

One day, when she returned from the post-office store, where she had taken a basket of early green beans, she came out to where her boys were repairing the fence to keep the stock out of the corn, holding in her hand a letter which contained the information that her Illinois son-in-law was going out to southwestern Missouri to buy cattle, and that her daughter would come that far with him and would remain a few days. No time was to be lost in getting ready for them.

Pennix did not know of anything to be done; he did not know where they would sleep. If the distinguished visitors would eat corn bread, hominy, some butter and plenty of buttermilk, with a slice of bacon and a small cup of store tea, they could be fed for a few days; but where they would sleep was a question that neither Pennix nor John could solve. Neither of the boys had ever been out West, and therefore did not know the convenience of the barn and a blanket. They thought everybody had to sleep in a feather-bed, and preferably upon rope cord.

The sleeping proposition was, however, happily disposed of by woman's intuition. Such a tall man as George could not possibly get upstairs, so he, his wife, and little son could sleep in the big bed downstairs. Pennix's mother would take the boys' bed and the boys could sleep upstairs on a bed prepared for the occasion.

The visitors arrived in due season, and after a few days the heads of the two houses were in consultation over a proposition that resulted in a revolution that was far-reaching in its consequences.

The hard life and poverty of the trio were plainly visible, and in such marked contrast to the life of luxury and ease to which the Illinois visitors were accustomed that they felt it their plain duty to suggest measures for relief.

The conclusion reached was that Pennix's mother and John should go and live with them in Illinois, and Pennix should go and live with his sister

Laura, who then resided on a farm in northern Missouri.

Just why Pennix was discriminated against and sent off to himself he was never quite able to find out; but it was probable that as he was impulsive and high-strung they did not want him in Illinois. This change involved the separation of the family and breaking up of the little home.

Ten days' public notice was given of the sale of stock, farming implements, furniture, etc.,—the accumulation of five years' work,—and on the day set the following articles were sold to the highest and best bidder: One cook-stove, two bedsteads, one table, four hickory-bottom chairs, a new-ground plow, an old "lizard" harrow, three hoes, a set of chain harness, an old mare and horse, a filly and two colts, two cows, three heifers, two calves, some corn and fodder, and about seven acres of corn standing in the field. The terms of the sale were five dollars or less, cash; for sums over five dollars, notes with approved security.

The cash sales were a drag, but the note sale was cheerful. Some few of them are still outstanding, as they could never be collected. Everything was in some way disposed of, except the forty acres of ground.

The family went together as far as St. Louis, where the prayers, kisses, hugs and tears of a good mother were bestowed on Pennix, who then took passage on the *Rob Roy* for the Northland.

Pennix was not sorry to leave the "grub patch," but was almost brokenhearted at leaving his brother

and his mother, who had been both mother and father for several years. Just why he had been sent away kept coming into his mind, and the thought gnawed at his heart. Was it because he was so bad and imperious, or had his mother ceased to love him? That thought he could not, would not entertain, for he knew that he was a favorite, if a mother ever has a favorite among her children. He therefore resolved to banish as much as possible these unhappy thoughts from his mind. Fortunately, the grief of childhood, however intense, is not abiding, and the grief-stricken child more readily recovers than a grown person. Grief, it seems, cannot find a permanent abiding place in childhood's hopeful, happy nature.

Pennix was on the hurricane deck of the *Rob Roy* when the gangplank was pulled in. From this vantage point the sights of the great city, the river, and then the woodland shores, far-away towns and farms, with the easy, steady movement of the great steamboat through the deep water, tended to divert his thoughts if not to assuage his grief.

Twilight shadows fell, and then a full moon arose to cast its silvery light across the tranquil waters. It was a balmy night, with just sufficient breeze to make it delightful. Pennix remained on the upper deck until late, and when he went below he found a string of fiddlers playing their instruments and people gliding around in a circle. He asked one of the passengers what they were doing and was informed that they were "waltzing." The word was new to him and he was as much in the dark as

before. It looked to him like a dance, but they did not stand on the corners; no one was calling off, and they seemed to go right ahead and round and round. How did they know where to go or where to stop? It could not be a dance, for no one was saying, "Honor to your partner and lady on the left," "Do se do," "Gents, counter-dance," "Balance on the corners," "All run away alemen left."

After a while the fiddles stopped and they quit their whirling around in a circle; but another crowd came out, the fiddles started up again, and they commenced to whirl around before any one said, "Another couple wanted here" or "Honor to your partner and lady on the left."

They seemed to understand what they were doing, for the floor manager did not have to straighten them out a single time. In fact, Pennix could not locate the floor manager anywhere. Still confused, he went to the Captain and asked him if he had a spare bed for him to sleep in. Pennix knew it was the Captain, for he acted in that imperious way that belongs to captains. The Captain took Pennix to a little room and opened the door.

"Sleep up there," he said, pointing to the upper bed.

"All right; I am in the habit of sleeping upstairs; but where are the stair steps?" Pennix replied.

"Climb up," was the answer, accompanied by a slam of the door. A gentleman or lady was sleeping downstairs, and Pennix left his clothes on the ground floor, with his little wad of money in his trousers' pocket. (Pennix always desired to extend

to that individual his thanks for not going through his pockets and appropriating that little sum.)

Being accustomed to climbing saplings Pennix had no trouble in going up the post that led to the upper bed; but on lying down he found out that he was over a big wheel that kept screaming, grinding and turning, and splashing the water just like the big wheel at the Keetly grist-mill on the Brazil. He thought it would never stop, but after a while it sank into silence and was not heard again until he awoke, when it was still grinding away. Pennix wondered if they had been grinding corn all night.

Next morning, when the lad was standing on the front part of the boat looking at the wide expanse of water, a colored man arrayed in snowy white robes came walking around the boat wildly beating an old tin pan; he had beaten it so much that there was no bottom to it, and he made more noise than a band of sheep. Pennix noticed that all the people who had been standing outside had gone within, and thought that they had a school on the ship or else there was a fire aboard. He was determined not to go to school, and if there was a fire they could readily put it out, as there was so much water handy; and if it got too hot he would swim to shore.

On entering the long, wide hall way Pennix saw people sitting down to tables; but there was nothing on them except some bottles filled with red and black looking stuff. He went on a little farther, and observed a room partly closed that had the appearance of a drug store or a kitchen. He entered, hoping it was the kitchen, as he was getting very

hungry, not having had anything to eat since he left St. Louis the day before. There were bottles filled with red and different colored medicines; mirrors, towels hanging to the high table, a few lemons on the shelves, some thin slices of cheese and dried ham, and something in a plate that looked like a cross between a dried crawfish and a grub worm,—they were pretzels, as he knew later,—and grains of spices and coffee, each in a separate dish.

Whether it was a drug store, a kitchen, a grocery, or a doctor's office, Pennix could not tell. He stood by and watched for a few minutes. It must have been the last, for a man would go up to the counter and the doctor would deal out in a tiny glass a small quantity of red stuff which the patient would gulp down with a wry face, and then go and get some of those coffee grains to take the taste out of his mouth.

"Yes," thought Pennix, "it is a doctor's office; for when I was sick with the chills and had to take medicine I took coffee grains to take the taste out of my mouth."

As Pennix's father had been a doctor, and as his two uncles were doctors, and Pennix expected to be one himself if he lived and got the education, he had a friendly feeling for them and claimed special recognition from them. Accordingly he made bold to ask the doctor about breakfast, so approaching him he said:

"Say, Doc, I ain't sick, but I want something to eat. Is this all you got?"

The fat, good natured doctor did not get mad,

but laughed, and on coming around the counter, pointed out a long table in the hall way.

"Go sit down at that table and call for anything you want," he said. "The *Rob Roy* serves the finest courses of any boat that runs between St. Louis and St. Paul."

Finest courses! How anything could be the finest and the coarsest was more than Pennix could understand. St. Paul! He wondered if he was any kin to the Apostle Paul of the Ozarks. Pennix did not ask the doctor more questions, but, confused at what he heard, the boy went and sat down where the folks were at the table; but alas! they had it all, either in little plates around their dish or on the big center plate!

Presently a colored man with a white dress on, resembling a woman's, came to the table where Pennix sat, and handed him a card with queer words printed thereon. Pennix looked at it and said:

"I can't pronounce these words; I am only in the Fourth Reader."

The waiter showed his white teeth, and then went away, returning in about half an hour with a number of the smallest and whitest dishes that Pennix had ever seen, each containing something nice to eat. The little Ozarker wondered why he was brought so many dishes, when a common "take up" dish would hold it all; but he concluded to say as little as possible, as several passengers were watching him and he might "get them down on him." When the man in white asked Pennix if

he wanted coffee, tea, or milk, Pennix just for fun said he would take a cup of milk, for he knew very well that they did not have any cows on the boat, and if the waiter wanted to tell his jokes Pennix would joke too. But when a large glass of milk was set before him and he tasted it and found it to be real milk, his surprise was manifest, for some of the passengers who sat opposite began to smile. Pennix finished his meal in silence, but ate everything that was set before him and wanted more, but dared not ask for it. A woman who sat next to Pennix left a hot white biscuit. Pennix appropriated it, and this making a clean "sweep," which counts one, he went out on the deck to see what was going on.

Pennix passed most of the day on the decks, and came very near seeing all that was to be seen on the trip. It seemed like a new world that he had suddenly wakened in, and nearly everybody knew Pennix before he got to his destination. He was among the deck hands, joining their chants as they pushed and pulled the gang-plank, with the pilots, with the cooks in the regular kitchen, and with the passengers. One old gentleman took a peculiar interest in Pennix, and gave him plenty of good advice, notably what to do and how to do it when aboard a Mississippi steamboat. The passengers seemed dressed extravagantly; but as Pennix now wore store-clothes and had on a new suit and a white shirt and collar, he felt as good if not a little better than any one on board, except the Captain. He learned a great deal about a steamboat

during his trip, and when the pan-gong sounded for dinner he was among the first to sit at the table. Such a dinner! The colored waiters just kept bringing on the good things, and each dish was better than the preceding one. Pennix thought at first that they did that way so the passengers would become ashamed of eating so much, or would finally sympathize with the waiters who had to do so much running to and from the base of supplies; but he was told that it was the system of serving dinners on boats. He looked around to see the boy who kept the flies off the table, and not seeing one he looked for flies; he could see no flies either, and so concluded that the boat outran them, and so had none.

The afternoon was passed as pleasantly as a Fourth of July. Supper came, which seemed to Pennix even better than the dinner, and then he was informed that Canton was the next landing. Here Pennix spent the night, and took the stage overland for Monticello next morning, which he reached about noon. Then a walk of about two miles brought him face to face with his sister and brother-in-law, whom he had not seen for several years, and a cordial welcome somewhat reconciled him to his new home and surroundings.

The arrangements that Pennix's mother and her son-in-law entered into in regard to the boy were that he should give Pennix a horse and saddle, a new suit of clothes when he reached his majority, a good education, first at the public schools and then at the Monticello Seminary. Pennix did not

know of these arrangements until he reached his new home, and at first they pleased him very much. He would have a long time to wait for that horse and saddle and that new suit of clothes, but the education was to commence that fall, and he liked the people, they seemed so sociable and friendly, reminding him of the Ozarkers.

CHAPTER XI

PENNIX busied himself about the farm until school commenced in the fall, then he started with the intention of not losing a day during the eight months' term, "but the best laid plans of mice and men," etc.

Muddy roads, rains, storms, two miles each way afoot, last but not least getting to school late every morning and missing some of his lessons were circumstances well calculated to set him thinking.

This "thinking" is a dangerous thing for the average American boy to indulge in. Pennix kept his own thoughts to himself, but became morose, pensive, and at times sad.

A big revival was going on at Monticello, and he would sometimes go with the folks; but generally he stayed at home, studied his lessons, or if he felt unhappy he would take a walk alone. The folks thought that the "Spirit was striving" with him, and accordingly gave him all possible encouragement to go to church and "get religion."

There *was* a spirit, a holy spirit, working in Pennix's heart, but not the Holy Spirit, as Pennix said to himself reverently. He knew that at some distance east of the Mississippi were his mother and his brother John. The morning sun was of more interest to him than the setting sun; for its rising

seemed to herald the dawning of a better day, while its setting foretold despair. The light toward the east was alluring, and something far away over the eastern horizon seemed to beckon and say, "Come." The moon as it circled through the starry night seemed to shine with greater effulgence toward the east, and there were stars that seemed to be just above those dear ones. For hours at a time the boy would fix his eyes on the eastern sky and think of his mother and brother so far away, or gaze at the moon as it filled the eastern heavens with its rising light, when tears and heartaches would drive him from his pensive mood. He doubted his ability to get an education under these circumstances, even though he had a favorable opportunity. He made up his mind what he was going to do, but kept his own council; all he now wanted was a chance to execute his purpose.

One night, when particularly possessed of this strange, lonesome yearning, he was asked to stay up for family prayers. The meetings had closed and Pennix's brother-in-law had failed to "get religion," but he was determined to keep on trying until success crowned his efforts, and so he held family prayers every night. There seemed to be a little inconsistency, in the eyes of Pennix, this holding family prayers after a day had passed and gone, in which the commandment "Thou shalt not swear" was not observed. However, Pennix remained in the room that night for prayers.

The good old Book was taken down, and Pennix offered to read verses about the same as in Sunday-

school, but his offer was declined. When the time came to sing, Pennix joined in heartily on the bass, singing that good old Methodist song "Come, thou fount of every blessing"; and Pennix thought of that fount of every blessing to him, his mother. After the song came the words, "Let us kneel in prayer"; but Pennix got up in a chair, where he knelt, letting his head rest on the top rounds of the chair back. To every good thing that was said Pennix would exclaim, "Amen, amen!" like a member in the corner, and once he roared out, "Lord, grant it!"

Pennix's sister now reached up and pinched him on the leg, and he yelled out, "Quit that!" This seemed to bother and confuse the suppliant, who hesitated and seemed to doubt the wisdom of procedure. Pennix immediately availed himself of the doubt and hesitancy, and leaning over the chair top, clapping his hands and swinging his body to and fro, he prayed with vehemence and fervor, closing with the memorable words of the Apostle Paul of the Ozarks:

"Lay thy loving arms around us. Guard and guide us through the deep valley and shadow of Death. And when thou art done with us here below own and crown us in the morning of the Resurrection without the loss of one, we ask for the Redeemer's sake, amen."

Pennix then arose and found that he had a "scrap" on his hands. As the "blacksnake" came around his shoulders it stung like an adder. He put up a good fight, and his adversary would

grin and squirm with pain every time Pennix put in a good lick with his heavy, stiff cowhide boots against his opponent's shins. But the blacksnake—a short whip with a black handle—was keener than a two-edged sword, and at last Pennix, not being able to endure it any longer, ran screaming with pain from the room. He entered his sleeping-room from the back door; put his best clothes in an old red valise, and just as soon as he thought they were all sound asleep he slipped out of the back door and started for Canton, a town on the Mississippi River, fifteen miles away.

A pale, pitiless moon was shining just above the horizon; the stars were barely visible through the misty atmosphere; the muddy roads were frozen over with a thin crust that would break through and let the boy's feet go down into the water and mud; the dogs would bark and sometimes come tearing out to Pennix in the road, where he would have another scrap, but he carried rocks and a club for them. With his eyes fixed on the east and his thoughts all of his mother, he passed by the school-house where he was to graduate, and by the academy, both located in the now dark and sleeping town of Monticello. On and on he went, with as high a courage and as holy a resolution as ever animated a youthful heart. He reached the river just in the gray of the morning, and found his old boat, the *Rob Roy*, at the wharf, and about ready to start down the river. He engaged passage for Quincy and got on board. He was muddy and tired, and the ticket agent had at first refused to sell him a

ticket on account of his dirty appearance; but when Pennix told him he was going to his mother in Illinois, he let him on.

At Quincy he discovered that he did not have money enough to take him to Springfield. At that remote date Pennix did not know anything about taking passage aboard the brakebeams. So he bought a half-fare ticket to Jacksonville, which place he reached about sundown, and started up the track toward Springfield with just thirty cents in his pocket. About a mile east of Jacksonville the wagon road crosses the railroad and then runs almost parallel with it for some distance. Here Pennix took the wagon road, and soon came to a covered bridge across a creek. It was now dark, and Pennix did not know which way to turn or where to go. He had borne up bravely all day, but now the tears began to fill his eyes. He went down under that bridge, and there he prayed and wept.

Pennix prayed and wept under the bridge until he was exhausted, and when he could not think of anything more to say that would help his cause, he came out and started up the road. He had not been visited by any special vision or revelation, but he now saw clearly what to do. The first thing was to get a place to stay all night, and then to get a steady job and work until he could go and see his mother, with a new suit of clothes on his back and some money in his pocket. He had read of other boys who had made their way in the world, and he could and he would.

This resolution infused new life and hope. A feeling of animation pervaded him. His red valise seemed lighter and the night less dark as he trudged on through the dark lane, when unexpectedly he met a horseman. Pennix hailed him in the dark and asked him if he knew where he could go to stay all night and get a steady job.

The stranger replied as he rode by:

"The second house on your left wants a hand. You can see the light from the road; but I don't know about its being a steady job."

Pennix now quickened his speed, and in a few minutes he knocked at the door, and asked for a night's lodging and a steady job. The man who opened said, "Come in," and Pennix at once stepped inside.

"I have only thirty cents," he said, "and I will give you that; but I prefer to do chores for you in the morning to pay for my night's lodging if you have no work for me."

"Well, you can stay all night and welcome; but I want a man to do some work, and not a boy."

The housewife was setting the table, and by the time Pennix had washed and combed his hair the supper was ready. He had not tasted food for twenty-four hours, had walked about twenty miles since his last mouthful, and as he was usually hungry between meals, one may readily imagine about how much of that supper he disposed of, or what the good hosts thought of their visitor.

With due deference to the appetite of Pennix, the hosts said nothing to him during the meal, but

watched him closely, and he would now and then, between bites, see them looking at him and then at each other.

"Did you get enough to eat?" the host said after supper. "You were certainly hungry; did you run away from home?"

Pennix then gave a frank and truthful recital of a few events in his life. They listened in astonishment, and the hostess would often stop washing the dishes, and with the dishrag in her hand come over to where Pennix and the host were sitting, and there she would stand listening to what he related. The farmer frequently filled his pipe, and kept striking a match to get it going again. He would puff for a minute or two, then let it go out. Pennix did his best that evening to entertain his hosts, possibly through selfish motives, for he did not want to go any further if he could help it. He wound up by singing a regular coon song that the colored population sang at revivals in the Ozarks:

" 'To de lan', to de lan', to de lan';
Whar I's boun', where I's boun',
Whar dar is no mo' stormy clouds a-risin';
Whar dar is no mo' stormy clouds a-risin'.

" 'De Sabior smile an' bid me come,
Whar dar is no mo' stormy clouds risin';
Brodder Ben an' sister Sal hab gone on befo',
Whar dar is no mo' stormy clouds risin'.

" 'De 'Postle Peter an' 'Postle Paul
Am a singin' in dat kyre;
Dey's shoutin' to de Lamb
Whar dar's no mo' stormy clouds a-risin'.

" 'I'se tired ob dis wide expanse ob night,
Whar de stormy clouds keep a-risin',
So I'se gwine to de lan' ob eberlastin' light,
Whar dar's no mo' stormy clouds a-risin'.

" 'To de lan', to de lan' knockin' whar I's boun' dar's no mo',
Dar's no mo' stormy clouds a-risin'.
De Sabior am here knockin' at de do',
I'll see you sinners no mo',
I's off to whar dar's no mo' stormy clouds a-risin,' "

Having been raised among the darkies, Pennix sang this song with true negro flavor and fervor, to the delight of his two listeners.

Putting Pennix away in as nice a room and as clean a bed as he had ever slept in, he was soon wrapped in the arms of Morpheus, and it seemed only a few minutes until he was awakened by the words "breakfast is ready." He was at first bewildered on awakening from his sweet sleep, but he soon got his bearings and recalled all that had occurred during the preceding day.

He quickly dressed himself, and using the hot water that the host had brought in, prepared his toilet and was soon at the table. The hostess informed Pennix that breakfast was about an hour late, as he was sleeping so soundly that she would not let him be awakened.

After breakfast Mr. Norton—for such was his host's name—said:

"My wife and I have decided that you may live here, and I will give you all the work that you can do. I may not have regular work until plowing begins, but will pay you fifty cents a day until then, and if you can plow I will give you fifteen dollars a

month, wet or dry. My wife says she will do your washing, so you will not be out anything except your clothes."

Pennix was delighted beyond words, but simply thanked him, and promised to do his best. He could scarcely proffer his thanks, for there was something that came up from his heart and choked his utterance.

He was then put to sorting potatoes and apples, and as he had great affinity for ripe apples, and had never had as many to eat as he wanted since he left his old home in the Ozarks, he liked his job and only wished that it would be a steady one.

At noon Pennix wrote a long letter to his mother, telling her about his "change in life," and that he had fallen in with good people. He knew that she would write to the people in northern Missouri informing them that Pennix was found and doing well.

He afterward heard that on the morning following his departure he had been tracked to the Mississippi River, and there it was learned that a boy answering his description had been seen in Canton that morning and had taken the boat for the South. He was now beyond recall and thereafter they would have to make the fires.

He was told, also, that if he had only let them know that he wanted to go to his mother that he would not only have been taken to Canton, but would have had his fare paid to his destination. Therefore, it appears that a little forbearance one with another, a little explanation and a compromis-

ing of difficulties and differences, might be the means of avoiding much trouble and unpleasantness along the thorny pathway of life.

Mr. Norton found something for Pennix to do every day, and at night the boy would put down fifty cents to his credit. The biggest spring job was the putting in of the oat crop, which gave him several days' work plowing and some good practice handling the splendid high-spirited teams of the Sucker State.

It was now about time to commence plowing for corn, and one day Mr. Norton came out to the woodpile where Pennix was splitting kindling for summer use, and said:

"I will give you fifteen dollars a month, wet or dry, if you will work for me this summer, beginning the first of April, and you may work through until the first of September. You may work for the neighbors through harvest just as soon as we get our oat crop in the stack; this will increase your pay, as harvest wages are about a dollar and a half a day. You may then stay with us this fall and winter and go to school in Jacksonville, and can have a horse to ride and it won't cost you a cent. I think this is the best for you, as my wife has formed quite an attachment for you. We lost our boy last December. He died of pneumonia and was about your age. I am going to town Saturday, and if you don't want to stay let me know so I can get another hand."

In the meantime, Pennix had received letters from his mother, who thought that if he had a

good place to work that he had better stay there during the summer, and that she or her son John would come down to see him. But Pennix had heard that a few miles further east the farmers paid much better wages than near town, and a good plow-boy could get eighteen dollars a month, and with this mistaken notion in his head he told Mr. Norton that he thought he could do better a few miles further east.

On counting out the silver and paper money Mr. Norton remarked: "I am sorry to see you go, but if you don't find anything better than I have offered to you you may come back here."

Mrs. Norton packed Pennix's clothes, putting in as presents a new pair of socks, two new handkerchiefs and a pair of good suspenders. "Your clothes are ready," she said, and went with him to the front gate, and as she shook hands with him she burst into tears, exclaiming, "I was so in hopes that you would stay with us and make this your home. You remind me so much of our dear Harry, who was taken from us last December. Good-by and God bless you. Let us hear from you and how you get along, and come and see us."

With these words spoken, she put her apron to her eyes and turned back toward the house. Pennix, with moistened eyes, shouldered his long red sack and started off up the lane.

The mistakes of a man's life are many. Pennix should have made this his home. They would have given him every advantage, living so close to Jacksonville, which is renowned for institutions of

learning, and he might in a small degree have been a comfort and satisfaction to those good people who mourned the death of their only child.

If Pennix's mother could only have visited him while he was at Mr. Norton's he would no doubt have remained there permanently. She would have seen what a good home he had, and her visit would have strengthened him with the Nortons, for to know Pennix's mother was to love her, and when they saw what a good intelligent parent the boy had their love for Pennix would have been strengthened. But the mistakes of a boy's life, too, are many.

Pennix traveled all day long, inquiring from every one he met if they knew of any one who wanted to hire a hand. Some of the strangers would scarcely reply, others would manifest a little concern, while a few would make fun of Pennix's long red sack which contained his clothes. After walking about fifteen miles, at sunset he stopped at a fine farmhouse, a house, from every indication, the home of a large farmer. On circling around through the lots, Pennix encountered the landlord and told him that he was looking for work, and thought he might get a steady job there and would like to stay all night.

"Yes, you may stay all night. I never turned a tramp from my doors in my life."

To be likened to a tramp was enough to arouse Pennix's wrath.

"I am from the Ozark Mountains of Missouri," he replied, "and as good as anything you got in

this State, and I have got the money to pay for my night's lodging."

This plucky retort, coming so unexpectedly, caused the farmer to laugh, and a merry twinkle lighted his eye.

"Good for you, sonny; if you are from the Ozarks you are just the boy I want to see. Come along and we will go in."

The boy found that it was the home of Jake Strawn, Jr., whose father at one time was the cattle king of the State and possibly of the world. Mr. Strawn was a large, red-faced, well-fed, fat, genial gentleman who lived in princely fashion. Pennix counted fourteen men who were working on the home-farm alone. There were several servant girls, and a few lady and gentlemen guests besides the family proper. When supper was announced he followed his host to the dining-room, where a table about thirty feet long was set with dishes containing good things to eat from one end to the other. It recalled the old camp-meeting days. Mr. Strawn, his family, guests, and hired men all sat down together. Pennix had heard some one say that a person who ate slowly worked the same way, so he put in his best licks to convey the thought that he worked fast, for he secretly wished to get a steady job there, as everything seemed so cheerful.

After supper most of the men assembled in a large room that had a little fireplace, the neatest that Pennix had ever seen, but so small that it would not take a stick of wood over two feet long.

The hearth was of brick instead of a flat, smooth rock, like they had in the Ozarks. Some of the men read the papers, others smoked, while the host and his guests talked about farm work, horses, cattle, politics, and some other things that Pennix did not understand. Finally, Mr. Strawn turned to Pennix and questioned him about the climate, people, soil, cattle, and various products of Missouri.

"I guess that you are from Missouri sure enough," he said, "for you seem to know a good deal about the State. I buy a few train loads of cattle in the southwestern part every fall."

"They will be after you to-day," said Mr. Strawn the next morning after breakfast, "and I don't want them to find you on my farm. Move on."

Pennix moved on. He shouldered his long red sack and moved across the prairie fields in the direction of a tall white house, which was the nearest one in sight, but was actually two miles away. Here lived William Corrington, who was a man of fine appearance, culture and style, and he claimed to be a descendant of one of the best families that ever left Germany. The family being at breakfast when Pennix went in, he did not sit down, but asked for a steady job. Mr. Corrington informed him that he had, the day before, brought out a hand from town. Pennix then bade them good-morning, and started for the front gate, which opened into a lane, but had proceeded only a short distance up the lane when he heard a voice calling, and on looking around saw Mr. Corrington coming after him.

"I brought a young man from town to plow for

me this summer," he said, catching up to Pennix, "but as he was raised in town and never worked much on a farm I don't think he will fill the bill. If you will wait for an hour or two I will try him, and if he can't plow and handle a team I don't want him and will give you the job, provided you can do the work. All I want is a man or boy who can handle horses and do good plowing. I have ninety acres to put in corn this year, and I expect two men to do the cultivating. I will plant it with a 'check drop,' but they must do the rest."

Pennix waited. He ate more breakfast, and about nine o'clock two prancing horses were hitched to a plow, with Mr. Corrington holding the lines and the town youth at the plow handles. Pennix walked around with them, and noticed that the youth did not know when the plow "scoured." When told to set the clevis so it would take less land, he reversed it so it took more land, and vice-versa. He also made mistakes when it came to regulating the depth of the plow. Pennix was astonished. There was a young man right from Jacksonville, that noted town of learning, and he did not know how to set a clevis to regulate the depth or range of a plow; did not know when a plow "scoured," and did not know "gee" from "haw."

Pennix knew that his opportunity would come next and that his chance for a steady job was good. He went to the barn, where the other hand, a Dutchman by the name of Lou, was at work, and told him that he wanted a sand rock to make the plow scour.

"A sant roct. Vot vos dot?"

"Any old rock or brick that will make the plow bright. The plow is rusty and won't scour, and I want something that will take off the rust. You furstahnda?"

"Och, vell I ferstandahs you now already. I shust god von brickt dot vas soft already mit de woolt shelft loft. I shust got him mit you already."

So Pennix got the soft brick, and then went back to where they were plowing, and sat on the fence until he was asked to "try his hand."

Pennix then tore a sliver off the fence and whittled out a paddle, turned the plow over on its side out of the ground, and remarked that the plow would have to be worked on before it would scour. He then rubbed the share bright and asked for the lines, which he threw across his shoulders, after tying them together, and shouted to the horses, "Get up!" They got, but Pennix stayed with them and held them along the proper line. Mr. Corrington followed, trotting along behind, and as the team circled at the other end he cried:

"Set the clevis to take more earth."

"It is taking more earth now than it can cut," Pennix replied.

At the next end he stopped the team and set the clevis to take less earth. He met the boss as he was going to the other end, but Pennix passed by. The owner then went to the end and climbed upon the fence, and was sitting there as Pennix rounded the circle. "It will take the vinegar out of your horses," he remarked as he swung by. Mr. Corrington went to the house, and in fifteen minutes the

youth from Jacksonville was on his way back to that center of learning. The test had come, and the steady job was won at eighteen dollars, "wet or dry."

At 11 o'clock Pennix was told to unhitch and come to the house, where everything was arranged satisfactorily.

One evening about sunset Pennix was told to "go and help Dutch Lou milk." Pennix replied in the language of Colonel Miller at Lundy's Lane:

"I will try, sir."

Dutch Lou had milked five cows and gone to the house while Pennix was doing his share. Presently he was called to the house, and when Mr. Corrington looked in the bucket and saw it empty he inquired about the milk, and was informed by Pennix that the old cow would not "give down."

"Very well, you will attend to the horses after this and Dutch Lou will do the milking." An answer that delighted Pennix.

Pennix had but one objection to the place, and that was that he had to sleep with Dutch Lou, who snored both coming and going. The sound was like the gratings of a dull buck-saw against a hickory knot. Pennix would give him some hard knocks in the ribs, then Dutch Lou would turn over on his side, to at last reassume his position on his back and continue to snore. Pennix got desperate, and resolved to break him of his criminal practice, though at the peril of losing his job. Accordingly he procured an old flour sack, tore it open, reduced it to the right size, and when Dutch Lou was ready, he

filled his mouth with the cloth. This reduced the noise to a minimum and made the snore assume more of a tender cadence, like a lone bumblebee roaring in his nest when all his companions have fled, or a sound like that made by the wings of a humming bird as it sustains itself in the air and sucks the sweet of the flowers. In the morning when Dutch Lou awoke he made a sound more alarming than a hundred bumblebees, but luckily he never stung. At last he got an old bed, and to the infinite delight of Pennix and the satisfaction of the inmates of the house, for his snorings were a common disturbance, moved to the hayloft.

After the planting of the corn crop Dutch Lou took a week's leave, with the understanding that he would be back at a certain specified time, as the corn would then be ready to be plowed. Mr. Corrington gave him a check for two months' pay, then due him, and he started to town to have a "good time," whatever that meant to him. He did not return at the time agreed upon between him and Mr. Corrington, and when he did come back he looked as if he had stolen sheep. He did not work on that ranch any more. The weather was a little dry, favorable for the cultivation of the corn, and with a day's plowing now and then by Mr. Corrington, Pennix took care of that corn crop of ninety acres. There were four horses in the barn all the time besides the racehorse, and Pennix would have a fresh team every day. He would be in the field a little after sun-up, and it would seem a long time, those bright June days, until it was time to unhitch

for dinner. He would often think it about noon, would unhitch and go to the house, to find it about eleven o'clock. However, he would feed his horses, eat his dinner, and return to the field. All the chores were taken off his hands; he had nothing to do but to plow and make frequent evening trips to the station for the mail.

Once Mr. Corrington's brother Frank came and plowed a few days. He and Pennix would practice boxing with the gloves at noon, and one day Pennix got a stinging slap on the ear, which so infuriated him that he jerked the gloves off his hands and started for Frank barehanded, intending to clinch and down him and then do him up. But Frank was "on," and understood a safer way to scrap than the Ozark system. He struck Pennix a blow that rang in his ear for days.

"'Nuff!" he yelled, and that ended it.

Pennix acknowledged that he was too hasty, and after washing and dressing the bruise they went back to the field.

Pennix had reached that age in life when he began to imagine that he was a man, and a good one at that, so this defeat was a good lesson that he never forgot. After that time he never had a fight unless it was in self-defense.

Well, Pennix worked there about four months and never lost a day or collected a cent of his wages. Then the harvest commenced in the neighborhood, and Pennix made several dollars in the harvest fields, being introduced as "The boy who works for Bill Corrington." As soon as the oat, wheat,

and hay harvests were over, Pennix went around and collected all his wages, and the last night he stayed with Mr. Corrington, who on this particular occasion treated him more like a guest than "a hired hand." He took him to the station the following day, where Pennix took the train for Springfield, and there he bought a brand-new suit of store clothes, hat, boots, "biled" shirt, collar, tie, handkerchief, socks, galluses, and with \$72.65 in his hip pocket and all fixed up in his finery he started out into the country to look up his mother.

In after years Pennix could always see the satisfaction of his mother's face, hear her joyous exclamations, and feel her caresses after presenting himself all dressed up in his new suit, and, as he showed by his lofty and dignified bearing, he too was proud of what he had accomplished. For about three weeks the visitor lived in sunshine and clover. He was the lion of the day, and there was none too proud to do him honor; his preferences and pleasures were catered to; the farm and all the horses and buggies were at his disposal. The busy season was over and all took a holiday. The fatted calf was killed. The cooks cooked things to suit his taste, and they waited on him first at the table, and not a fly did he have to keep off the table, but some one sat by his side at the table and kept the flies off of him with a fan that was brought from the Ozarks! He was given the best bed in the house, and some one came in his room when the house was still, and kneeling by his bedside took her boy to her bosom as she did in the sweet long ago.

CHAPTER XII

ONE morning in the latter part of August, Pennix and John hitched a span of good trotters to the buggy and were off for Springfield to "take in" Oak Ridge, which is the site of Lincoln's monument. They put the team in a livery barn and walked out in order to notice in particular Lincoln's old Springfield residence, which did not enhance Pennix's opinion of the martyred President.

But he found that Lincoln was well respected in his immediate neighborhood, while in Missouri at that day he was held responsible for "setting the niggers free." Many thought that he could have "stopped the war" if he had wanted to.

The long, plain, weather-beaten house, full of windows and only two stories high, was not as good a house as Pennix was born in, and that fact led him to believe that his father was a greater man than Lincoln. But his eyes were opened at Oak Ridge Cemetery, where hills and hollows, woods and flowers, shrubs, gravel walks, cedars and oaks, with school benches to sit on under the green foliage, reminded him so much of the Ozarks and were such a relief from the bleak, treeless prairie, that after all he decided Lincoln was a man of taste and loved the beautiful in Nature. For Pennix thought that the late President owned the Park and had fitted it up to suit his taste.

He then went up on a hill, where a great, cold,

white-looking structure stood—"grand, gloomy and peculiar." He made inquiry what that was, and was informed that it was the "Monument." He started for the monument, wondering as he went what a monument was and what they put it on the top of the hill for.

In the Ozarks they built on hills for three reasons: There is more air stirring on the hills than in the valleys; the high land is considered more healthful; the top of the hill offers the best view.

Pennix ascended the great marble steps and was soon standing on the second floor. Here he saw the four great pedestals that represent a cluster of soldiers, sailors, and guns, and in one cluster Mr. Lincoln is represented as holding a whole quire of paper in his hand. He is writing something, while a colored man is kneeling at his feet, and apparently Lincoln has had him in chains, for there was a long chain around him which had just been broken. The negro is kneeling to Mr. Lincoln, and with a wry, distorted, sorrowful countenance seems to be saying, "Massa Linkum, if yous will only spar' dis chil' dis time I's going to do it no mo'"—or so it seemed to Pennix that day.

Pennix then noticed a connected series of blocks of stones that encircled the upper story of the monument, forming a part of the wall, on which were written the names of the States, and he looked to see if there was a stone from the Ozarks. He could not find one from the Ozarks, but was glad to see one with the name "Missouri."

Pennix now began to wonder who this man was

that all the States should have their names written there. He had heard regrets expressed when the news came of his assassination; he had heard some one say, too, that a president should not go to a theater, but that that in itself did not merit death. Even Bill Haggard, whose powder-horn got Pennix in trouble, was heard to say, "They ought to tried him for another century and see what he would do."

Then the lad was shown the sarcophagus of the man that the world delights to honor. All he saw was a cold gray stone, coffin-shaped, but said to contain the remains of Abraham Lincoln. He had to pass through an iron gate to get into the cellar where the stone coffin rests.

The man who has charge of the monument took the visitor to another room, where the Lincoln relics are kept. Here the boy was shown Lincoln's old blue-jean suit. That settled it with Pennix. The President could not afford "store clothes." It was a suit large enough for "Paul," and bagged at one knee. Pennix thought that his own old brown every-day suit was a finer piece of goods, and he knew that it fitted better and was made in better style.

Afterward the guide produced a powder-horn that Lincoln owned in his day and kept his powder in. Pennix took hold of it, carefully examined it, but failed to see anything wonderful about it. It was not half as large as Bill Haggard's or as smoky and greasy. And as for the Lincoln buckskin shot-pouch, that was a diminutive affair compared with little Dave Greenlee's, for little Dave could put a

half-dozen squirrels in his shot-pouch, besides bullets and patching. The Lincoln gun was smaller than the average gun in the Ozarks. Pennix stood by the side of it and was a head taller; while he could not have reached the top of Jake Bridwell's long rifle, which he claimed would kill a deer half a mile away.

Pennix was shown many other interesting things, but he has never recalled what his impressions were regarding them, because everything was new to him and he had no standard of comparison. He left the monument without any well-defined ideas on the subject, only wondering what it was all about.

Later, too, he witnessed the military pageantry that attended the removal of the archives of the State from the old Memorial Hall to the present capitol. There were long lines of glittering bayonets and fine military evolutions in the wide streets of the capital city. He remembers having seen General U. S. Grant as he rode along in an open carriage with uncovered head amid loud cheers and the waving of handkerchiefs. For hours the splendid procession passed by, while the roar of distant guns and the glad acclaim of the populace rendered this a memorable occasion.

Memorial Hall was visited next, and the new State house, where he saw many strange and wonderful things: notably, Confederate flags, real cannon, one of which had been captured from the enemy; a rapid-fire gun which had been given by Queen Victoria or the British Government to Jefferson Davis. The tattered flags, full of holes, the old

guns and other military equipment bore mute evidence of the heroism of a former generation.

One may well afford to travel a long distance to pay honor to the memory of Lincoln and note the many wonderful and historic things that are in the capitol building. It is a good place for the young people to go and study the history of the State and Nation, but they should be accompanied by older and wiser heads who will explain all strange things and impress them with the sacrifices that have been made for the priceless heritage of civil and religious liberty.

It was now the month of September, and Pennix was about fifteen years of age. He had not been in school over twelve months all told, and at the age most boys and girls are graduating from the high schools, Pennix was earnestly imbued with the idea of securing an education, and not so much for the love for learning as the material benefits he thought were to be derived from being an educated person. He wanted a respectable place among his fellow-men, wanted to be something better than a "farm hand." He did not have enough money to board and go to school, so he thought of the next best thing, viz., work for his board and attend a country school. He thought of his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Norton, and came very near writing to them; but since that youth from Jacksonville did not know enough to set a clevis he had lost faith in that center of learning. Furthermore, his mother wanted him to remain in the neighborhood so she could look after him and take care of him in case he got sick.

After some inquiry he learned that a Martin Bridges, a crippled soldier, was willing that Pennix should come there and "chore" evenings and mornings and work Saturdays for his board.

Pennix went to see Mr. Bridges, and a deal was made with that gentleman. Martin had been a drummer in the war and would often play "the five points of war," which is the noisiest thing outside of the real war points.

Pennix was now back at the same school he had attended four years before, and he shook hands with most of the boys, and some of the girls smiled and bowed. He was given a seat with Jim Tuffe. A few stray bottle-flies alighted here and there on the desk, and Jim would take his rubber string when the teacher was not looking and with quick and certain aim send the fly "flying." There was a creek within about half a mile of the schoolhouse, and notwithstanding that the scholars had orders not to go in swimming, one hot day in the middle of September about fifteen of the boys "went in."

But there was a spy in camp who told the teacher—a model teacher, modeled after the fashion of Ann Cupboard.

She whipped fifteen pounds off of the "twins"; that is, they actually shrank in weight that amount. Breck Crane was so sore that he could not come to school next day, and Pennix and Jim were so stiff that the flies were not molested afterward. Every boy that went in the water that day was thrashed, after which the victims assembled under a great oak and talked over their common grief, and even threat-

ened the teacher with removal, as the director's children had not been spared. But no action was taken by the school board. They only said, "If you don't want to get licked, mind your teacher."

One immediate good, however, resulted from this punishment. It cemented imperishably the sympathy and love of those who were in it.

Pennix experienced during the following cold and stormy winter the most gloomy and painful period of his life. Never before did he know what real hardships and sufferings were.

When the mercury was twenty or twenty-five degrees below zero he had to make two fires, feed the horses, and take the buckets and go a quarter of a mile and milk two cows. He was required to get two gallons and a half of milk, giving the rest to the calves. At times it seemed as if his hands would freeze while milking. Sometimes the old cow would raise her foot and give her leg a circular swing and catch Pennix at some unprotected point, and after sending him and his bucket into a fence corner or snow pile, would look at him and seem to smile at the wreck she had wrought.

At times he would have to put his hands in his pockets to get them warm, and at other times it was so cold that he could not expose his hands but for a short time. When he failed to get his two gallons and a half of milk from any cause or causes, he would go to an old well nearby, uncoil the frozen rope, and get enough "milk" out of the old well to make up the two gallons and a half. After breakfast he would "hitch up" and feed the stock,

the cattle and hogs, some thirty-five head in all, and throw off a few armfuls for the milk cows on his way back. Saturdays it was work all day, usually gathering corn or chopping wood after the "chores" were done. On Sundays there were chores straight. When the weather was not too cold he would study his spelling-lesson on the way to school, reaching there usually after the class had recited. The room that he slept in had a large open window into which the snow kept blowing until it was four feet deep in his bedroom. He would often go to bed with cold, wet feet, and crawl in between two sheets that were as cold as it was out of doors.

With the advent of spring he caught a cold and coughed much, but after spring had come the cough threatened pneumonia or consumption. At nights he would rarely get his work done until long after dark, and would then be so tired and sleepy and worn out that he would fall asleep if he undertook to study his lessons.

This was the life that Pen Pennix lived that winter.

His father's and grandfather's slaves fared better before the war. This occurred, too, almost within the shadow of Lincoln's monument, and in the great State of Illinois, where there is more wealth and plenty among the farmers than anywhere else on earth. When he grew older Pennix wished that another Abraham Lincoln would come forth to set free the farm hands of America, who produce nearly all of the agricultural wealth of the country, and whose reward is about eighteen to twenty dollars

per month for sixteen hours work out of each twenty-four.

Farming is a good independent life, and Pennix never objected to being the owner of a good farm himself; but of all labor which he has done—and he knows what it is to tamp a tie, make rails, cut cordwood, mine, team, dig sewers, bear off lumber, hold scrapers, dump carts, load and unload steamboats, work the streets—he would prefer any of these to that of a “farm hand.”

After the spring came Pennix went to work for Henry Trumbow, a brother to Pennix’s brother-in-law. Henry was a large, good-natured, jovial man. He owned a section of land worth a hundred dollars an acre, and hundreds of cattle and hogs, and lived an easy, enjoyable, comfortable life. Henry was a votary of the checkerboard, and was never happier than when he was winning in that game. It made but little difference whom he was playing against, just so he won the game. On the other hand, if he lost the game he would refuse to play; but if winning he would play for a day at a time. He would often call Pennix in from his work and ask him to play checkers.

Of course the boy would quit his work and play; but if he did not prefer to play and wanted to finish his job he would beat Henry, or “skunk” him if he could. When Henry would see that he could not get into the king row he would jump up, scatter the checkers over the floor, and declare that Pennix was the “biggest rascal” that he had ever played with, and that he would never play him another game.

But if Pennix preferred to play checkers he would let Henry win every game, which would cause the latter to laugh and chuckle and cajole the lad about his inferiority as a checker player.

Once Henry and Pennix were going to Springfield to see a big show, and on the road they met a Dutchman with whom Henry had had some altercation. The Dutchman challenged Henry to get out of the buggy. Henry accepted the challenge, and they went at it. They went at it, not in Sullivan-Corbett style, but in catch-as-catch-can way, right in the yellow clay mud, where the ground was unusually muddy. Soon as they clinched they rolled and tumbled in the mud, over and over, until Pennix could not tell which was which.

At last one of them got the other down,—face downward,—and the one on top chucked the head of the one underneath into the ooze and mud until he was almost buried out of sight. Then they arose, and the one underneath took both hands, and after scraping off vast depths of yellow clay, the muddy outlines of Henry's face appeared. His Sunday clothes and white shirt were gummed with mud and he was drenched to the skin.

The Dutchman remarked as he went over to his team:

"Vell, you dinks I vould scheat dot vidder voman whose husband vos dead already, did you?"

This scrap was livelier to a boy up a tree or in a buggy than a real circus; but Pennix and Henry went on and saw Barnum's show.

Henry had two lovely daughters, and one of them

came home from college and brought with her some of her schoolmates.

One evening Henry and Pennix were out pailing the cows after the day's work was done. There were five cows in all, four good ones and one bad one. Whoever got through milking his two was expected to milk the bad cow. Her worst fault ordinarily was to jump off a little distance, then stop and repeat, and the milker was supposed to follow up and milk between jumps.

Henry's college daughter and her lady guests were out there watching the process, and Pennix, by way of warning to the cow that he was milking, said, "So, you old wench, so!" whereupon Henry's college daughter reproved him for using such "uncouth" language, adding, by way of compliment, "You seem to be a boy of more than ordinary promise, and on life's tempestuous sea remember that there is nothing insuperable for an unconquerable will to accomplish. Search the pages of American history and you will discover that most of our great men, those who did most for the amelioration of the human race, were born and reared in the lap of poverty and in the domicile of want."

Of course Pennix did not know what she wanted, but just then Henry came up grinning and said:

"What would Cornie think if she had heard you talk that way? You are poor and Cornie is rich, and you ought to try to get her." Pennix got mad and retorted:

"Henry, you have a half section of land that I am working for."

Then Henry got mad and started to milk the bad cow. A shower had fallen that afternoon, and the lot was slick and a thin layer of light mud was on the top of the ground. The bad cow jumped away as usual, Henry following up, trying to milk between jumps. At last Henry's wrath arose, and poising himself on one foot and turning the other one loose brought it back to give it a good start, and then let it forcibly vibrate toward the bad cow, who saw the foot coming and jumped out of its way.

The foot went on up in quest of the cow until it got directly above Henry's head and threw him on his back. Then he sent a column of profanity up through the blue dome of heaven that caused his college daughter and her chums to proceed toward the house.

Henry then approached the cow with a gentle, seductive "So, so!" and was quite successful in discharging his duties, when suddenly the cow brought her tail around on Henry's white shirt and with her foot sent him into the fence corner with the bucket on top of him. Henry picked himself up, never said a word, but took the top rail off the fence. The cow was now fully penitent, and stood meekly by in the fence corner. Henry approached with a sweet, enticing "So!" and on coming quite near he raised the fence rail high above his head, and giving a grunt he let the other end descend toward the cow. But the rail did not find the cow; it struck the fence and jarred loose at the end held by Henry. The cow jumped the fence and went to the pasture. Henry's wrath now knew no bounds; though he

rarely became excited, he was capable of great strides and feats of indignation and fury. With a steady determination he went to the barn and led out a young filly which Pennix was breaking to ride, but no sooner had he jumped astride of her in the big meadow than she commenced to buck, and Henry soon found himself on the bosom of Mother Earth.

Pennix went to the house and to bed, but on listening from the upstairs window he could at times hear Henry in pursuit of cow and filly. Next morning the filly was in the barn and the cow in the lot, but no member of the family, much less one of the hired hands, ever ventured to ask him any questions about his adventures on the preceding evening.

One of the young ladies gave Pennix "Barnes' Brief School History," which he studied that summer. This was the first history that Pennix had ever seen. He would carry a leaf of the book in his pocket, and every time he stopped to rest the team and for half an hour at noon he would study that leaf, one leaf a day being his rule. After going through the book in this way he knew "Barnes' History," and ever afterward had a good knowledge of the fundamentals of American history.

"These are nice evenings to go snipe hunting," suggested Mike Howard, a cousin to Henry's wife, who was visiting them. Pennix did not know anything about hunting snipe, but as long as it was hunting something, Pennix was in for it. So Mike and the hired hand and Pennix all went away down

about four miles to a creek bottom in the woods, and after carefully adjusting the sack and stationing Pennix just five paces to the north of the sack, and leaving him with the lantern, Mike and the hand went to drive the snipe from out of the swamps. Of course the snipe would see the light and go into the sack, and all Pennix had to do was to say, "Presto, change!" and close the sack and he had them. Pennix stayed there for an hour, but no snipe appeared, and the men seemingly had lost their bearings and failed to return. Pennix then took the lantern and went back home to report that the men were all lost, but found them snug and comfortable in their beds.

Pennix planned for some time to hit some scheme "to get even" with Mike. He took the joke in good humor, and said he would fool somebody else. Now Mike was decidedly superstitious and religious in a way, and believed in signs, ghosts, goblins, and spiritual revelations. He had been going to see a grass widow who lived about half a mile from the house, and Mike's sister and Pennix had both been protesting against his making these nocturnal visits. One evening when the sky was very red, Pennix was going from the barn to the house and met Mike in the yard. In a low, earnest tone Pennix said:

"Mike, I was looking at the sky awhile ago, and saw in dim outlines in the clouds these words, 'Mike, Mike! why persecutest thou me?' I do not know what it means; possibly her husband has died and become an angel. You can almost see some

of the letters yet," and Pennix then tried to show him the words.

Mike acknowledged that he could see his name very clearly.

"Now, Mike, what have you been doing? I tell you what I think. It is a warning for you not to go to see that widow any more."

"Well," said Mike, "I know 'tain't right, but I told her I'd come to-night; but, Pennix, this is my last night—I don't go any more."

With the assistance of one of the hands Pennix rigged himself up as a ghost from the world below, and not from the sky, where that strange apparition had appeared. Taking a stiff paper flour sack and properly supporting it with stays, or ribs, and cutting a huge mouth with teeth, large eyeholes and great nostrils and arranging a large white sheet so that it would not encumber his motions, he and the hired man hid away among some old buildings in a ravine where Mike had to pass going home.

A tallow candle had been suspended from the top of the sack so as to emit light through the eyes, mouth and teeth. This device had been tried before it was ready for use and had proved a success. At last the widow's door opened, and after the ceremony of parting was over, the sound of Mike's footfall and his cheerful whistle broke the stillness of the dark night. The candle was lit and the sack placed securely upon Pennix's head. Just as Mike stepped upon the bridge at the ravine Pennix rose and advanced toward him.

"O God, have mercy!" Mike exclaimed, and

rushed across the corner of the bridge and started up the hill along the "turnrow" in the direction of home. Pennix followed in close pursuit. On, on they went up the hill, Mike ever and anon giving vent to expressions of hopeless despair. After running about a quarter of a mile they reached a big gate. If Mike got through that gate he would have a down-hill run for the house. Pennix, putting in his best efforts, came up very close, and Mike made a turn and went down through the cornstalks, then made a circle and started back toward the grass widow's. It was now a down-hill run, and the cornstalks popped while Mike put forth his best efforts, and Pennix made up his mind that he must catch him. On they went, regardless of the obstacles that impeded their progress and hindered their speed. When they reached the bridge where the strange apparition had appeared, Mike crossed in safety and Pennix disappeared as mysteriously as he had arisen.

Cost, the hired hand, saw the full chase.

Mike went back to the widow's and would not venture out, pretending the next day that he was sick and could not come home.

But the facts were known, and had been witnessed by Henry and one of the other men. Henry said that Mike and the ghost passed near him, and although he knew what it was, yet with its eyes and mouth and nostrils afire, and a height seemingly of seven feet from the ground, with its long white robe, it was calculated to scare a brave and calm man, even one who had been forewarned.

Mike never went back to see the widow again, but departed in a few days to his own home.

After the summer work was completed, Pennix went over to see Uncle Tobe Pyle, and asked him if he could stay there that winter, do chores for his board, and go to school.

Uncle Tobe was an old bachelor and lived with his aged mother at the old homestead. "Yes, Pennix," he replied. "I haven't much for you to do, as I always keep a hired hand in the winter, but you can stay if you want to go to school. I didn't get much education myself, but I am willing to help others to get one."

Uncle Tobe was one of the good men of his age, and his mother, "Grandma," was as kind to Pennix as if he were her own son. Pennix was then in the fifth reader, and pursued a course of study which now would correspond with the fifth grade. He was fond of history, and read all the books of travel and adventure that he could find. Even in earlier years he became familiar with the adventures of Daniel Boone, "Mike" Fink, Louis Wetzel, and other pioneers and Indian hunters.

His favorite book, however, was a poorly written and cheap edition of the life of Napoleon Bonaparte. He studied Bonaparte with great assiduity, and looked upon him as the greatest man that ever lived, and he sincerely regretted that he did not live in the time of Bonaparte so he could have been one of the Old Guard. The fact remained, however, that Bonaparte was the greatest man that reigned and fell in all the annals of time; but his only am-

bition was the glory of France and his own advancement. His final downfall was no doubt for the good of man and the advancement of the Anglo-Saxon race, but the boy could not see it in that light then.

Pennix now went back for the third time to the school to which he was attached. He thought Breck Crane the dearest little boy he had ever met, for his bright black eyes and sweet smile and curly hair endeared him to all his schoolmates.

James Tuffe, Pennix's first seatmate, asked Pennix to sit with him. Charley Morrison, when not talking with the girls, was as pleasant as a May morning. "Thrifty the Gritty" was always robed in smiles, while the twins, Ed and Ev Baugh, who could not be told apart, even by their own folks, were the most gallant and companionable boys that could be found anywhere. These and others equally as good made life pleasant at the Enterprise school.

Furthermore, Pennix's brother was to go about three months in the dead of winter when it was too cold to work, and he would give a dignity to Pennix among the other scholars.

Pennix, from one cause or another, had had hard luck in school all his life, but now it seemed that the prospect was full of encouragement.

The school teacher belonged to that class of pedagogues known as the "superior teacher." He was from the East and had been educated in Massachusetts. He stood over six feet high, was as slender as a beanstalk, and wore the proverbial long-tailed black coat, white shirt, and black tie. He

carried a compassionate, condescending smile for all the benighted heathen around him. He would make the scholars say "rute" instead of "route" and "granary" instead of "grainery," and became wrathful when a pupil said "laft" or "laffter" for "laugh" or "lawfter," or "depot" for "dapo." He was a teetotaler when it came to the use of intoxicants and the Indian weed; was against the dance, the game of baseball, and cards he considered an abomination; he was enthusiastic about the improvement of fragments of time, and would show by his own figures on the blackboard what a boy could accomplish by reading so many pages a day, which would make so many books a year, and so many hundreds of thousands of volumes by the time he was old; and he would figure out what one five-cent cigar a day would amount to if the money was put on compound interest and let run from then until a certain time. And as for beer, why, he would show by diagram and figures that any man who took a drink had his liver and diaphragm covered with the yellow jaundice and was on the road to a felon's cell and a pauper's grave.

The teacher drank neither coffee nor tea, and demonstrated by the charts which he brought from Massachusetts that tea hardened and thickened the mucous membrane of the stomach, and by a little book of statistics which he always carried in his pocket he would show how many victims in the asylums had at one time been coffee users. One day, when Pennix's class was reciting, he asked the teacher if he could swim, and he said:

"No, I don't belong to the finny tribe."

However, he was a man of "superior" learning, and what he did not know about books would not fill a page in a primer. Pennix did not like his style and his way was not Pennix's way, but he took Pennix nearly through Ray's Third Part Arithmetic, and clear through the Civil War in history. He would read pieces out of the papers and deliver lectures every Friday afternoon, and one day he told the story of his life; but as he never went swimming, hunting, fishing, or to see the girls, but attended school year in and year out, Pennix thought that his boyhood was a blank. He taught a Sunday-school class in Springfield, his home, or "headquarters," for of course he was not married, and was a member of the Presbyterian Church. He considered political affairs beneath his notice; he never attended a caucus nor a political rally, and seldom voted, but he could lecture on political economy, and recount the stories of the lives and achievements of all the Presidents, and trace the origin and history of political parties from the foundation of the Government down to the Tilden-Hayes controversy. He was a strict student of political events, but not an active politician. He gave it as his opinion that Tilden had been elected President, but he said he did not care which was inaugurated. He seemed to have a standing with the State officers at the capitol and friends among the legislators, and he seemed calm and undisturbed when all others were excited. While ostensibly fa-

vorable to the Tilden electors and cause he would not shoulder a gun to put him into office.

He told the story of the election of Hayes by the Electoral Commission, or rather, how the Commission was organized favorable to the interests of Hayes. This is his version of the affair, and following events verified his explanation:

David Davis was a member of the Supreme Court. As the bill creating the Commission required five of the oldest Judges to serve on the Commission, that would include David Davis, who was independent in politics, and this would make the Commission include seven Democrats, seven Republicans, and one Independent. But David Davis was a candidate for the United States Senate and a deadlock had existed in the Illinois Legislature ever since the balloting for Senator had begun. The Republicans could not elect a Senator,—not having a majority,—while all the Independent members voted steadily for Davis, who also received many Democratic and Republican votes. Thus the situation stood in the Legislature at the time of the creation of the Commission.

Then came a message from Washington City addressed to the leaders of the Republican forces in the House and Senate of the Legislature, which read: "For God's sake elect David Davis Senator and save the country," signed by John A. Logan, Senator from Illinois. The next day David Davis was elected Senator, and immediately resigned his seat in the Supreme Court, and Justice Bradley

succeeded him on the Electoral Commission, which then became eight Republicans and seven Democrats, and how they voted is known to the student of history.

The excitement of the people at that time was intense. There was scarcely a Democratic home in that country that had not purchased new rifles, or cleaned up its old ones, and laid in a supply of ammunition in order to be ready to go to Washington at the first call to inaugurate Samuel J. Tilden President of the United States.

Pennix's brother-in-law procured a rifle for him, and he was ready and anxious to go. All that was needed was one word from Tilden, and millions of men who had voted for him and thousands who had not would have enlisted under his banner.

The country stood on the threshold of a civil war, the contemplation of which caused the world to grow pale. Just when this section of the country was in a fever of excitement and it seemed that the dogs of war were going to be turned loose and the North and South, particularly the North, ravaged by fire and sword, John M. Palmer served notice that he would address the people in the court-house yard on a certain evening, and as he would treat the Tilden-Hayes contest from a patriotic standpoint he wanted all to come and hear him. Now the people had great confidence in John M. Palmer, and on the appointed evening everybody went, including Pennix. General Palmer was then in the splendor of his mighty power, and as a thinker, orator, and statesman he had few equals.

He made a speech that evening which should be in every school-book in this land. Never had Pen-nix heard such eloquence, never such pleading with the people, never such an earnest supplication to accept peacefully and without rancor or heartburning the decree of the Electoral Commission. He paid a tribute to the heart and head of Rutherford B. Hayes. He said that the South would be freed from the carpetbagger and military rule. He gave an eloquent, graphic description of his experience in one war, and then, with both arms extended as if calling upon God as a witness, he portrayed the dire consequences to country, men, women, and children which would follow and be a part of another war. He pleaded with the men to love their neighbors, and not hold them personally responsible for political wrongs done at the centers of legislation. Raising his voice to a greater pitch of eloquence, which sent a thrill through the hearts of the listening multitude, he continued:

“Remember the children, for under the guiding care of God this country will survive all her enemies without and within, and the Saviour’s words, ‘Peace on earth and good will to men,’ were not spoken in vain.”

His speech was like oil on the troubled waters; all animosity and heartburnings subsided, men assumed their daily work, and good will and brotherly love found their places in the hearts of men and women.

CHAPTER XIII

LATER in the winter season an adjoining school district sent a challenge to the Enterprise school to meet them in a spelling contest. Pennix and his associates held a conference, and decided that it would not be best to say anything publicly to their school about the challenge, but to accept it, and a half dozen boys go over at the appointed time, spell the other school down, and get all the glory and credit. Accordingly, Breck, "Thrifty," Ed and Ev (the twins), Jim, and Pennix met at the home of the twins, and at early dark started to the scene of fame and satisfaction. On reaching the schoolhouse they found that many people had gathered there to witness the contest. Pennix went to the teacher, and in behalf of his schoolmates informed her that their challenge had been accepted and they had come over to spell.

"But," said the teacher, "is the whole school coming, or just you boys?"

"Only us," said Pennix.

The teacher said that she had about sixty scholars who would take part in this contest, but she didn't like to put so many against a few.

"You will find that we are enough," said Pennix.

"Very well," said she.

At the proper time she lined up her school, which

went down one side of the house and down the end to the corner; and opposed to this long line was Pennix's little band. Pennix's side of the house had to spell half the words, and whenever a pupil missed a word he sat down. Pennix guessed at the page in the spelling-book where the teacher's finger was, and the girl on the other side made a guess and won. Therefore Pennix had to spell the first word. All was silence and expectation among the visitors, and the opinion was that the teacher had made a mistake and the school would be unmercifully dealt with by the students from Enterprise. The first word was "inflammation," which Pennix spelt with one "m," and the girl on the other side quickly spelled the word correctly. The crowd giggled and Pennix got his hat and waited on the outside.

Thrifty soon came out, having failed on the word "terrapin."

Then came Ev; he had failed on "sieve." Breck missed "visible."

Ed missed "bulletin," and Jim, after holding his ground for a short time, went down on the word "ammunition."

The boys started for home without delay, and all agreed that if the teacher had not shown partiality and had used the same spelling-book that was in use in their school, that the Enterprise school would have easily won.

A few days after this humiliating defeat Pennix received an invitation from the boys of the Crow's Mill neighborhood to join them on a certain evening and take a hand in a "shivaree."

If there was anything Pennix liked better than a coon hunt, it was a "shivaree," and as he could not get any one to go with him he went alone. He met the crowd at the appointed place, and Alexander Jones gave him a revolver and about fifty shells, loaded with powder only. There were about a hundred in the crowd, and they carried circular saws, bells, guns, bugles and drums.

After riding about four miles over the snow on a cold moonlight night they reached the premises of the newly married couple.

Having dismounted and tied their horses, they stealthily approached a large, flat, one-story house located in an open field. They formed a line which encircled the house. All was dark and still within, but a smoke visible in the moonlight was seen coming out of the chimney, which told of the presence of the wedded couple.

The bugle sounded and a girdle of flame and a deafening shout responded. The drums, bugles, pans, bells, circular saws and shouts made a deafening noise, but brought no response from within. At last some of the boys got on top of the house and stopped up the flue with an overcoat. Presently a light was seen within, the door opened, and the crowd was invited inside. The scraps from the wedding dinner were served and some cigar money donated, but as Pennix did not smoke he could claim no part of the cigar money.

On the approach of spring Pennix went back to Henry's to work, but about the first of June he concluded that he would go South and work in

the harvest fields, and thus make enough money to go off to school the next winter.

Everybody tried to induce him not to make the trip, his own people in particular being much against it, but Pennix was obstinate. He believed that by going down to southern Illinois and harvesting as the grain ripened through Illinois, Minnesota, Dakota, and Manitoba, and on northward to the North Pole if he found wheat that far north, would bring him a net return of not less than two hundred dollars. After he had figured out on paper these returns there was no use for any one then to try to dissuade him from making the trip. Accordingly, with a flour-sack full of old clothes, he boarded a train for St. Louis.

From St. Louis he took passage on the boat for a landing just fifteen miles above Cairo. Harvest was just commencing, and Pennix found work at once at two dollars per day. He had no trouble in keeping up his section, four binders after an old self-drop McCormick reaper. Pennix now clearly saw that he would come out at least two hundred dollars ahead, and when he went back late that fall they would all see that his "wild goose chase" was no vision or dream. He would thus capture the goose which laid the golden egg, and he verily believes to this day that, had not the unexpected happened, his expectations would have been realized.

But after harvesting three or four days, while helping to lift the reaper off of a stump he got his fingers caught in the cogs of the big power wheel, and the skin was taken off of the front finger, and

two other fingers were peeled off like an onion, leaving the bones visible, while he lost the end joint of another finger. Luckily there was a doctor living close by who dressed the wound and gave him much medicine, and told him to come back next morning. But next morning after breakfast the old Dutchman he was working for paid him off, which, with the money that he had on hand, amounted to about eleven dollars.

"Vell, you vork no more dis harvest, you shust go home," said the Dutchman.

But the physical suffering which Pennix endured, and it was severe, was as nothing compared to his mental trouble. All his expectations were blasted, and he would now be a cripple for life. What would the folks and his associates say now when he went back? They would laugh at him, and say, "I told you so!"

He would never subject himself to such humiliation. He would not go back. No, never! But what to do was a hard question to decide. The Dutchman had paid him off and told him to go home, so he could not stay there. Picking up his flour-sack of old clothes he walked over to the house where the doctor lived, and as he went he revolved the situation over and over again.

Pennix usually reached a quick decision, but in this case he could not decide. The doctor dressed his wounded hand and Pennix told him that he had been paid off and told to go home, but as everybody had advised him not to go harvesting he could not go back home with a crippled hand in lieu of the two hundred dollars.

The doctor told him that with the exception of the index finger there would be no scar or crippled condition of the hand. "All you will have to do is to properly care for and rest the wounded hand. Keep it properly bandaged and apply this medicine according to directions, and after two or three months, with good care, your hand will be well. Yes, you should go home, or some place where you will be properly cared for for two or three months, during which time you cannot use your hand, for it will be tender and painful for some time yet to come, and all bruises will irritate it and prevent its healing. I will give you enough medicine to take along with you to cure your hand, and I will charge you but three dollars, just enough for the medicine. That will leave you enough to get home on. You can take deck passage and go to St. Louis for two dollars. You will be on the boat two nights and a day if you start this evening."

Pennix took deck passage on the *Andy Johnson*, which was then plying south of St. Louis. Everything moved off in ship-shape, and that night Pennix, using his flour-sack for a pillow, laid down on some cotton-bales, but could not sleep, as his hand and his anxiety kept him awake. He had not yet determined where he would go when he reached St. Louis, but had fully decided not to go back to Illinois. The *Andy Johnson* was due at St. Louis at a late hour of the second night of the passage, and when Pennix awoke next morning she was lying at the wharf.

Worn-out by his physical and mental sufferings

he had slept soundly that night, and when he awoke and looked around he could not find his hat nor his sack of old clothes, and as his medicine was in the sack his hand would suffer and fester, and possibly blood-poison would set in. He had been robbed! He felt for his pocket-book and it was gone. Searching all his pockets he found that a twenty-five-cent coin and a ten-cent silver piece was all the money he had in his possession. His hand was raw, tender and painful; the flesh was off his fingers and he could see the joints and bones, and there he was on the *Andy Johnson* at the wharf of a great city, and nearly penniless!

Now Pennix, having been raised in the country, had no knowledge of city life and ways. He considered a city a place of vice, robbery, and murder, where a man was doomed to die unless he had money to give to everybody who wanted it. He seriously and honestly believed that everybody in a city was bent on robbing somebody else, and especially unsuspecting country folk; and it would be just as probable to expect the Mississippi to run up stream as to look for assistance in St. Louis. The only thing now to do was to get out of there before he lost his thirty-five cents, and probably his life.

He did not then know that there were a dozen hospitals in St. Louis, and that without money and without price he could obtain the best medical attendance in the civilized world. He did not then know that in view of his destitute circumstances and wounded hand that he should have gone to a hospital or the Board of City Physicians and asked

for the proper help. On the other hand, his only scheme was to get out of St. Louis without being caught and robbed.

He went to a second-hand store on the river front and bought a ten-cent cap, and used ten cents for cheese and crackers, leaving him fifteen cents with which to move. On inquiry he found that the *Rob Roy* would depart in the afternoon for Alton and all way-landings, and Pennix concluded he would go to Canton on the *Rob Roy* if he could beat his way. And from Canton he would go to his sister's in Lewis County, near Monticello, with whom a reconciliation had been effected, and stay there indefinitely, or at least till his hand got well. The *Rob Roy* was the boat that had carried him before, and he expected good treatment from her gallant crew. He knew, too, that his sister would be glad to see him, and not laugh at his misfortune. Accordingly, he went on board the boat in the afternoon, and long before she was ready to cast off and draw in the gangplank he was stowed away in a lifeboat that was fastened overhead on the lower deck.

Of course he watched his chance, and when there were no eyes to see he climbed over the railing of the boat and jumped in, and tucked down close to the bottom of the lifeboat.

The whistle blew, the last bell sounded, the big wheel began to turn, and the boat swung out into the "Father of Waters" and started on her trip to the northland. Darkness closed in, but the steady thud of the machinery told that she was moving on her way through the waters.

Pennix fell into a kind of doze, but was awakened in the night by a man who was looking into the lifeboat. Pennix was ordered to get out, and was then marched toward the stern, but quickly made a circle around and came running down the other gangway, and seeing a dark corner he darted in and stood still and silent against the wall. He could hear the crew hunting for him, and such exclamations as:

"Which way did he go?"

"Where did he turn?"

"Did you let him get away?"

At last a deckhand passed by, paused, started on, stopped again, looked into the dark corner, advanced, peeped, came closer, and reached out his hand and pulled Pennix out of the corner into the better light, then yelled at the top of his voice:

"I'se got dat tramp."

"Bring him up here, and don't let him get away," was the response.

The big black roustabout marched Pennix up to the bow, where he was lined up with three or four others who were traveling on their own passes toward the North Star, and a guard was placed over them. Pennix stood in line a few minutes until the excitement attending his capture subsided and the curiosity of the mate and some fifteen roustabouts had been satisfied by coming up and peeping into his face, or holding a lantern before his eyes while they gazed upon the pale, fair face of an American boy who was determined to reach Canton on that boat.

Suddenly the dim lights of a city appeared in the distance, and some one of the crew remarked that "the deadbeats" would be put off there, meaning Pennix and his new-found associates. Pennix watched his chance, when suddenly he went down the gangway like a rabbit that had been smoked out of a hollow log. The alarm was immediately given, and every roustabout started in pursuit and down the passage that Pennix had taken. Pennix went down the gangway, crossed the boat at its stern, then came back up the other side to the bow of the boat to a tarpaulin which was spread over some freight, lifted the tarpaulin and slid under it.

The rain was now falling heavily, and Pennix could hear the falling drops upon the tarpaulin which rested upon his head. He was afraid to move lest his pursuers would see his movement and detect his location. For many minutes he could hear them running this way and that, often passing near where he lay, but most of the noise came from the stern of the boat, where the search was vigorously prosecuted.

At length the loud whistle of the boat, echoing along the hills in the dreary night and the drizzling rain, announced that a landing of no mean pretensions was just ahead. The crew then abandoned the search and began to hustle freight. Pennix was in mortal dread lest the flour-sacks which were under the tarpaulin were billed for that place, and he did not draw an easy breath until the bell signaled "go ahead."

The crew now hastened back to their sleeping-places and Pennix straightened out and fixed himself more comfortably, and fell asleep and slept on until he was awakened by some men pulling at the tarpaulin and letting in a blinding flood of light. Pennix jumped to his feet and found himself in the presence of a number of hard-looking deckhands. The mate came up, and swore as only a Mississippi River mate knows how to swear, and the boy did not know whether they were going to tear him to pieces or throw him overboard.

Pennix now stepped up to the mate and offered to show him his hand as mute testimony of his suffering and distress. But the mate only swore the louder, and would not let Pennix take off the rag that bound his wounded hand.

"No, by the blankety-blank, you don't go! This boat would be loaded with people like you if we would carry them. No, by —, you get off at the next landing!"

Pennix then asked permission to go upstairs and see the passengers and see if he could collect a loan to pay his fare with. This proposition so enraged the mate that he swore at two of the roustabouts whom he ordered to guard Pennix, threatening to shoot them if he let him escape. Pennix then offered to give the mate his note as payment for his passage. This made the mate's anger wax hotter than before. Pennix's note was good at home, wherever that was, but it was not honored for passage on a Mississippi River steamboat. Directly the mate ordered the two roustabouts who were

doing guard duty to "clear the gangplank," and he would guard that "tramp with his hand done up." Pennix now noticed that the *Rob Roy* headed toward the Missouri side of the river. Was the channel on that side of the river, or were they going to make a landing over there in the wilderness and put him off?

The gangplank was run out, and three fat, sleek, unshaven men and Pennix were marched off that plank and left on terra firma. The gangplank was pulled in, the bell rang, the boat backed out and then pulled out up the river.

Pennix's emotions at that moment can neither be described nor imagined; only those who have had similar experiences can comprehend the agony and pain of such an hour.

To Pennix's great surprise his new-found companions were laughing and chattering away, and bragging how they beat the boat for so many miles. They asked Pennix where he got on, and when Pennix told them, "At St. Louis," they replied, "Come off the dump; what you take us for?" But they cheered Pennix up, and told him not to take on so; that they would get his hand dressed at the next town, and for him to stay with them, saying, "You will be a useful member of the profess, and can pay us back by bringing us hand-outs." Pennix did not understand this jargon. They gave Pennix a little piece of greasy chalk, and told him to keep a lookout for a white cross mark about the fences and notice which way the longest mark was directed, and go in that way for a hand-out; but if

there was a knot in the mark to pass on, as that house was *n. g.*

"Yes, we want you; nobody would refuse a boy a hand-out who had his hand tied up." Pennix then asked if they were put off on an island. "No, the railroad is not over a mile from here," one replied.

They started out of the timber over a dim trail, and Pennix fell in and brought up the rear. As soon as they reached the railroad each one picked out his house for a "hand-out," and Pennix was shown a house and instructed to "strike them for a hand-out." All were then to meet at the water tank, just below the station, and report the success or failure that they encountered, and then another council would be held and a divide would be made. They parted there, and Pennix never saw them again. He went to the depot, and while resting there a passenger train from the South rounded the curve and stopped at the depot. Pennix jumped aboard between the baggage car and engine and rode for some time on the "blind baggage." The train gave a shrill whistle, slowed up, and a voice from the engine said:

"Young feller, you jump off here, we can't take you to the depot."

Pennix followed the train in, and found that he was in the city of Hannibal. He inquired how far it was to Canton, and was given the blissful information that the train had just left, but there was a steamboat lying at the wharf now that was on its way up the river. This information was obtained

from a sorrowful-looking citizen, as the depot man did not know anything about the boats. Railroad men never do know anything about boats whose routes parallel their tracks.

Pennix went down to the boat, and to his amazement he recognized the *Rob Roy*!

He went aboard, and climbed the stairs up to the hurricane deck, where he took a chair and surveyed the landscape o'er.

In a short time the gangplank was pulled in with a musical ho-he-hi-ko; the bell signal was given, and the great side wheels began to turn and splash the water as if in wrath at the thought of having to go on farther into chilly Northern waters. Presently a smooth-faced, well-dressed chap, with a band on his cap, came to Pennix, saying:

"Ticket, please."

Pennix informed him that he had no ticket, whereupon the courteous young man offered to show Pennix where tickets could be procured. Pennix told him that he would attend to that, and for him to go about his business and not be sticking his nose in other people's business. The youth then informed Pennix that he would have to go with him and procure a ticket or he would report him to the Captain. Pennix then arose and followed the youth, feeling as though he were going to his own funeral. The youth took Pennix to the ticket office, where the ceremony was brief. "Take him below and turn him over to the mate" was the sentence. Pennix's chaperon escorted him down below and into the presence of the mate.

When Pennix and the mate met face to face both were silent for some time. The mate looked at Pennix and Pennix looked at the mate, and as neither spoke Pennix thought of the line, "We never speak as we pass by." The eyes of the man seemed to bulge out, and they had a wild, dreamy expression. He seemed *pop-eyed*, which indicates a fine flow of language and great imagination. The mate seemed to recoil and wince under the steady gaze of Pennix's small, bright, intensely blue eyes that were centered on his. At last, as if awakening from a dream, and in a tone of voice that indicated doubt and forgetfulness, he remarked:

"Seems to me that I have seen you before."

"Yes, sir; I have been on this boat before now."

"I thought that I put you off below Hannibal?"

"You did, sir."

"Are you sure that we put you off?"

"Yes, quite certain of it."

"But you are back on this boat now. Did you get on this boat at St. Louis?"

"Yes, sir; day before yesterday."

"Let me see; you got on at St. Louis and was put off below Hannibal, and here we are in the river twenty miles above Hannibal and you are still on the boat. If you were put off, you are back now, that is sure. Well, I will be — if that don't beat the — Where are you going?"

"To Canton, sir."

"Will you get off there?"

"Yes, sir."

"But will you stay off? Now you remember

this—if I see you on this boat north of Canton I will shoot you and throw you overboard. Do you understand that, you wizard, nymph, ghoul, or tramp! I have had enough trouble with you, you——” But he stopped.

The mate was no more anxious to get rid of Pennix than Pennix was desirous of leaving the boat, so they parted at Canton.

It was now dusk, and Pennix started for Monticello, twelve miles across the prairie country. The roads were muddy by reason of the late rains, and a slow drizzle was yet falling. Pennix had no bundle or baggage to carry, and he summoned all his strength for this last effort, reaching his haven of rest just as the god of day appeared through broken clouds above the horizon. His hand was in a state of putrefaction. He was weary and hungry, not having had anything to eat since he left St. Louis, and then only some bread and cheese. But now his hand was dressed, breakfast served, and he was put to bed in his brother-in-law's nightshirt. By and by he was awakened by a doctor who came to dress his hand, but immediately fell asleep again, and slept all that day, the following night and until noon the next day, and was then awakened by his sister, who was afraid to let him sleep any longer. He was “out of his head” until the nourishment of about three meals at one sitting revived and restored body and mind. For several days he could not get sufficient food to satisfy his craving, but his recovery was notable and demonstrated his normal health and excellent constitution.

His brother-in-law was away from home at the time, so Pennix in a few days went to work plowing out the corn, which was too weedy to insure a good crop. The corn had been laid by, but Pennix gave it another plowing. He used a single shovel and one horse, and throwing the lines across his shoulders in Illinois style and holding the plow with his free hand, he managed to do a good job.

Late in the summer he received word from his mother that she and John were going to move back to their little home, the "grub-patch" near Dry Branch, and they wanted him to meet them at St. Louis or come on as soon as possible. Pennix had no money with him, but had about eighty dollars in a bank at Springfield, Illinois, which money he wrote for. Payment was delayed pending identification papers, but within a few weeks the cashier honored his check. He now went to Canton, where he took the train for St. Louis, and from there he took the night train for St. Clair, the nearest station to Dry Branch. When the train reached St. Clair Pennix was sound asleep, and the conductor did not wake him up until he reached Lebanon. Here a freight train was met, and at the request of the passenger conductor with whom Pennix had ridden from St. Louis, he was allowed in the caboose of the freight train and was soon making good time on the back track. The train on reaching Dry Branch whistled loud and long, but passed through the village under a full head of steam.

Pennix demanded of the conductor to stop and let him off, but the conductor said that he was run-

ning on a time order and had to make the next siding for No. 3. So Pennix sat down, and the next four miles were made in about as many minutes. Here Pennix changed cars, and came back to Dry Branch and landed in a merchantable condition. The platform was full of people, as is usually the case at country stations, and for a few minutes Pennix was busy shaking hands with the neighbors, who seemed glad to see him back with them again.

On inquiry he learned that his mother and brother John had been there several days. He then hurried on down to the little farm home, and found the folks there keeping house. Pennix was received with open arms, but the tears rolled down his mother's face as she untied the bandage and saw three red fingers not yet fully healed. The story had to be gone over again, and this adventure, with their late experiences in the Sucker State, seemed to satisfy all of that little band that Missouri was good enough for them, and, sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, that henceforth and forever they would remain at home, one, all, and inseparable.

Pennix and John had seen something of the world, and knew how other people lived, moved, and earned their living. They had taken a course in the business college of the farming world, and would, no doubt, profit by their experience and observation. But of course the system of farming in Illinois was not practicable at home, the land being too rough and stumpy to use modern farming implements. But the ambition and determination, the

energy and thrift of the farmers of Illinois could be emulated at all times and under all conditions. However, neither Pennix nor John needed this stimulus, for both were naturally industrious and ambitious.

The two brothers now found themselves poorer than when they had left the grub-patch years before, their only gain being in years and strength to combat the life that now confronted them, and an energy that characterizes the Illinois farmer. But, determined to get a new start and collect around them some of the comforts of the farm, they looked around and made inquiry what the business of the neighborhood was and how they might get some of that business.

The "Frisco" Railroad was about to commence fencing its right-of-way with rails, and the contractor had let sub-contracts to the local merchants, who let other sub-contracts to the most prominent and influential farmers. This gave a value to all rail timber within hauling distance of the railroad. Furthermore, the body and limbs of the trees not used for rails could be cut into cordwood, and when hauled to the station and properly ricked and accepted by the railroad, the merchants, who had a monopoly on all the cordwood, would pay \$2.25 per cord in store goods. The whole country seemed engaged in this industry. Pennix's brother engaged himself to drive Russell Kerr's team at \$15 per month and board, which was the top price paid for men. Pennix was to manipulate the timber on the home farm, and it was thought advisable to hire

a good hand. Fortunately they were able to secure the services of Richard Johnson. "Dick" was about five feet long and three feet in diameter, and the best man with the axe, maul, and wedge in that land of wood-choppers. He agreed to cut the timber and split the rails at 75 cents per hundred and his dinner. As he could average his hundred rails per day without extra labor, his wages were good. These rails sold for from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per hundred in the timber, depending on the distance from the railroad. The company paid them \$3.50 per hundred, distributed along its track.

Dick felled the trees and Pennix cut the tops into cordwood, and the friendship that sprang up between them never grew cold in after years. Pennix had brought with him from northern Missouri two bright brass spurs. The rowels were large, and Pennix had polished them up until they shone like gold. Dick took a great fancy to them, and asked Pennix what he would take for them, and Pennix told him that if he would split five hundred rails for them he would let him have them. Dick took him up, and Pennix turned them over to Dick before he had a chance to back out. Dick wore them home that evening, and felt as proud of them as a boy with his first pair of red-top boots. Neither Pennix nor Dick had a horse, but that was no business of the former; if Dick wanted the spurs, that was his business.

All fall and winter the work of splitting rails and cutting cordwood went merrily on; hard work, it is true, but it laid the foundation for strength and

endurance, which are very valuable, if not indispensable acquisitions to those who have to make their way in the world.

The winter evenings were long, but passed pleasantly with such companions as the *St. Louis Republican* and the *Christian Advocate*, which were in fact and in truth "black and white and read all over." A serial story which was published in the *Republican* was of great interest, representing the hard life of a friendless lad who, through many trials and tribulations, won a good station in life and at last married the daughter of his employer, the girl he loved.

More land each year was reclaimed from the forest primeval, until eighteen or twenty acres were in cultivation, but the breaking of new ground was a hard task. A yoke of oxen was hired whenever there was new ground to break. Pennix would take the hickory whip and John would take hold of the handles of the plow, and with a pop of the whip and a Haw Buck and a Gee Berry they would move off at a slow speed to turn the virgin soil and rocks, and to strike rocks, stumps, and catch on roots.

CHAPTER XIV

A BIG revival of religion was on at Dry Branch, and during its progress it seemed to Pennix and John that a kind of presiding elder was making love to their mother, and might persuade her to marry again. Accordingly the two boys held a council, and decided to present to their mother their fears and ascertain from her what her intentions were. They told her that if she got married she must expect to lose her boys, for they "would not have a step-dad bossing over them." After hugging and kissing her sons, she said:

"I would not part with you for the best man that lives; my next robe will be a funeral robe."

That settled it, and "confidence was restored."

Pennix had a chum attending the revival meetings by the name of Silas, and Silas's brother Hi had been converted, and, being a fluent and ready speaker, would often take the pulpit and exhort. One night Hi was uncommonly eloquent, and pictured the sinner as standing on slippery rocks while fiery billows rolled beneath his unhallowed feet. Hi thought it time to rescue them from their impending doom, and pleaded most earnestly with all Christians to go forth and bring in the lost and wayward members of their flock. He stood upon the high pulpit which gave him a commanding view

of the congregation, and raising his voice to a high pitch, exclaimed:

"Get sinners! get sinners!"

Pennix and his chum were standing side by side in the back part of the meeting-house, and Hi, after looking at Silas for a moment, left the pulpit and started down the aisle. Pennix and Silas were singing with the congregation at the time, but no sooner did Silas see Hi start than he exclaimed:

"He is after me!"

With this he slid under the large bench, and Pennix and Bill Kerr closed up the gap. Hi was lost for a moment among the many people who were standing in the aisle, but soon came in sight, and then crowded down between the big benches toward where Silas had been seen standing. But when Hi got there Silas had disappeared, and after a look of surprise and disappointment, he started back without saying a word. The boys were very busy just then helping with the song. As soon as Hi retreated, Silas crawled out and took his position between Pennix and Bill Kerr. Hi, on going back to the pulpit and looking around, saw Silas standing there singing, and his eyes dilated and he wore a sad, dejected expression on his countenance. He did not exhort any more that night, and his injunction, "Get sinners!" had been a failure with him.

On one occasion Pennix and his chum Ed concluded to make a night raid on Uncle Peyton's melon patch. It was true that they were welcome to all the melons that they could eat at any time or

all times, but the excitement of a nightly foray where the melons were growing on the vines was what they wanted.

They wended their way over an unfrequented path through the woods until they came to the bed of a dry creek which had high banks on either side. Entering the dry bed of the creek at a dark, obscure point they cautiously proceeded until they came to a point opposite the patch, where they peeped above the banks, and finding that the coast was clear they climbed the bank and were in the midst of the "water-millions, musk-millions, and pomegranates!"

It was a beautiful night, with here and there a cloud skidding across the face of a full moon. The frogs' mellow croak and friendly calls for "Patrick O-Rouk, O-Rouk," heard at intervals where the pond-lilies grow, was music to the boys. The lone whippoorwill, whose first notes in summer, as the legend goes, heralds the time of the year when the women should get the wood, only enhanced the romance of the night. The cock's midnight awakening did not cause them any alarm, while the rumbling and shrill blasts of the passenger train, Westward bound, the flash of the headlight, the glimmer of the windows, and the receding green spots on the rear of the train added beauty and illumination to the peaceful spot and enchantment and romance to the night. The barking of the watch-dogs and the answering from neighboring dogs, and the deep baying of hounds after a fox on the brakes and banks of the Bourbeuse River, and

the echoing notes of the bugle calls accompanying the chase, were sources of wild and weird enchantment.

Melon after melon was conveyed to the shadows of a persimmon bush, where the rich red heart was eaten. At last the awakening light in the east warned the boys to make tracks for the "Rink," which was a hut in the midst of a remote forest, fixed up with crude furniture, where Ed and his chums were wont to retreat in case of danger or parental displeasure.

The boys were soon fast asleep, but were awakened by Uncle Peyton, who had tracked them from the melon patch. Pennix and his chum had fixed up two pairs of old boots for this trip. By diligent search they had found two pairs of old run-down boots, which were about four sizes too large, and by taking off the heels and nailing on to the heels and soles battered tin plates they hoped to avoid suspicion. But when Uncle Peyton saw these strange indentations in the earth his curiosity and suspicion were aroused, and he determined to hunt down the raiders. The tracks led to the "Rink," where he found the innocents asleep; but he only laughed over the matter.

"I'll be consorny if I didn't think it was them yaller niggers that are out here from St. Louis! I saw them on their way yesterday to the Bourbeuse, and they stopped at the spring to get a drink and passed by the patch."

Uncle Peyton then took his departure, and the boys went back to sleep, and after sleeping all day

they departed for their respective homes in the quiet of the evening.

When Pennix was about fifteen years old he spent a few winter days with his Uncle Peyton. There were about three inches of snow on the ground, and one morning Uncle Peyton came into the house, saying to Pennix, "Get Willie's gun and we will follow some deer that have just crossed my field."

They tracked the deer over a hill and to a valley full of thick underbrush. Uncle Peyton, who led the way and understood the habits of the wild animals of the forest, suddenly stopped.

"These deer are there shore," pointing to the thicket just below them. "You hide behind that tree and I will go around. They will come up this ravine and will stop at the edge of the thicket and look back. If they don't stop, you stop the leader as he passes by. If you get him, keep quiet, for the other one will come back to find his mate. Be steady now."

Uncle Peyton circled around, and in about fifteen minutes Pennix heard them coming. All deer hunters in the Ozarks know this sound, which once heard is never forgotten. On they came, bounding over logs and through the brush, which was heavily covered with snow, and suddenly one appeared at the edge of the thicket, stopped and looked back. Pennix could see only its head above a pile of brush. The deer gave a terrific snort as Pennix's finger pressed the trigger. A rifle's sharp report echoed over the hills and reverberated down the bluffs of the Bourbeuse, a small cloud of smoke with a pow-

dery smell hovered around, and then all was still. Pennix ran frantically to where the deer had stood, and looking over the pile of brush he saw a great horny buck lying there weltering in its life-blood.

Pennix threw his hat high in the air, and gave a succession of triumphant yells that started all the neighbors in the valley toward the scene of his triumph. The bullet had passed through the head of the deer just beneath its ears. The distance was just eighty-seven paces, as stepped by Uncle Peyton. All agreed that no better shot could have been made, but Uncle Peyton was not pleased with Pennix's vociferous yells, as they scared the other deer away.

Keep quiet under such circumstances? You might as well look for quiet at an Irish wake or among the boys at a Fourth of July picnic!

Pennix and Ed would often help Brin Hamilton with his harvest. Brin was the best man to work for in that country, for he paid good wages, did not work his hands hard, and always had the money ready to hand over when the work was done. He had made a snug little fortune in the "diggin's," and then purchased a farm in the valley, where he lived a life of luxury and ease. For some reason Brin would favor Pennix and Ed when the harvest season set in, although there were many who wanted to work for him in harvest time.

Brin was a quiet, good-natured man, who loved his family, his neighbors, and himself. He did not believe in that old saying of the Boston philosopher, "Plow deep while sluggards sleep, and you will have corn to sell and to keep," nor that equally non-

sensical maxim, "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." During the harvest season he would sleep on as the sun slowly ascended the eastern sky, then when the orb of day was high and hot in the heavens he would call to his son John:

"John, git up and git Sibby some wood."

After a few weak calls would come the response:

"Send Henry, I don't git the wood."

Then a call would ascend from below:

"Henry, you go and git Sibby some wood."

Henry would send down the information that he did not get the wood. Silence would then fall like a mantle of peace over the happy sleepers. But presently the feeble, plaintive wail:

"Jesse, you git up and go and git Sibby some wood."

But Jesse would hand down the opinion that he did not get wood in the morning before breakfast, and if Sibby wanted any wood she knew where it could be found. The white-winged dove of peace would then spread its wings over the happy home until the rattle of pots and splashing of water informed the hungry boys above that Sibby had got the wood and breakfast was on the wing. The call "Breakfast!" brought them all out of bed and down the stairs laughing, singing, and talking.

Breakfast served, the boys would then feed, milk, and do the other chores, including some wood for Sibby, and then go to the harvest field. It should be remembered that heavy dews formed in the valleys every night, so the grain could not be cut

until it dried off, and the dew commenced to form in the afternoon just as soon as the sun was hidden by the hills. Brin owned and operated a self-drop reaper, and he raised bountiful crops with little labor.

The family was sociable and smart, and after they got started in the morning were industrious. It was a delightful place to "go to stay all night," a custom very prevalent in that country at that time. Brin lived in the woods, but there was seldom any wood at the wood pile, especially in the summer season, as it was considered too hot then to cut it.

Nelson Stevenson's was the next best place to work, either in or out of the harvest. "Nelse" was an early riser, but "went to bed with the chickens." There never was a time but he would stop his work for an hour or two to relate his adventures, if there was any one who would listen to them. One hot day in June, when Pennix was helping him hoe out his corn, Pennix said:

"Say, Nelse, let's go and get a drink, and tell me a story about yourself when you was a boy."

"Come on," said Nelse, dropping his hoe.

They went to a small spring, where they laid down flat on the ground and drank the cool water until satisfied, and then sat down in a cool shade near the spring.

Nelse then took out his "twist," took a big chew, and related the following story:

"When I was a boy in ole Virginia I was sent out to hunt some stray cattle. As I was ridin' through the woods I heard a rattling sound in the

bresh an' leaves an' turned my horse that way to see what was going on. It was a fight between a big snake an' a woods' rat. I threw one leg over the horn of my saddle an' sot there an' watched them to a finish. I never seed sich a fight in my life. A *hand-to-hand* encounter, a death struggle as the papers would say, jist such as you read about.

"The snake would coil up, lift its head, which was as big as mine, an' strike at the rat, but the rat would make a quick dodge an' then jump an' cotch the snake by the throat. The snake would then give itself a twist an' a spin that would send the rat a-whirlin' around. Once the rat lit right in among the coils of the snake when it was spinnin' 'round, an' it was thrown sky high. They fought an' fit an' fit an' fought. But after a while the snake caught the rat by the snout an' slowly sucked him in. My! how that rat did claw an' fight an' pull back; but the snake wouldn't give an inch, an' down he went, his tail still wigglin' as he went out of sight.

"I went on an' found the cattle, an' as I came back that way, thinks I, I wonder what has become of that snake, I don't see him anywhar. So I kinder rode 'round in a circle, an' run on to a big fat pussy rat a-leanin' against a holler tree. It was kinder stupid-like an' didn't stir when I rode up. It seemed all swelled out an' asleep. I got off my hoss an' tied him to a saplin', an' took my revolver an' shot the rat through the head. I noticed that the rat kept wigglin' an' flouncin' around after it was dead, and I couldn't see what was the matter with it or what made it bounce an' circle around so.

"I then took my jack-knife and *ripped the rat open*. Oh, Je-ru-sa-lam! Out flounced the very snake that had swallowed that rat about an hour befo'. How it all come about I never could see, but s'pose that the rat eat his way out of the snake. The hole in the snake an' the loss of blood made the snake weak-like, an' the rat then lit in on it. The snake didn't seem the worse for wear, for as soon as it saw me it run into the bresh an' hid. I was a small boy at that time an' hev thought about it since, but could never figger out how that rat got in the snake an' the rat got on the outside of the snake in the wind-up."

CHAPTER XV

TIMES around Dry Branch were dull; there was but little work, and wages were low and poorly paid. Pennix and John did not have sufficient land and stock and means to insure a living at home, and the prospects were not flattering. Pennix now considered himself a man—if not in years, at least in his ability to work. He could chop two cords of wood in a day or split a hundred rails, but he did not want to live the life of a wood-chopper or rail-splitter. He believed that there were better opportunities in other places, and he knew that if he had to work on a farm that he could obtain better wages in Illinois.

The matter was gone over carefully by the little family, and it was mutually agreed that if Pennix wanted to try his luck in Illinois the coming spring and summer he could do so. Pennix's mother, however, withheld her consent for some time, and appeared much troubled over the thought of another separation. But at last she said, after an effort or two to speak:

"I have made up my mind to let you boys do whatever you think is best for your interest and future good. If I can't help you, I am not going to be a hindrance. Of course it almost breaks my heart for you to leave home again, but I take comfort in the thought that wherever you go that you

will be upright in your actions and will not go in bad company. I know, too, that you will have the confidence of your employers and associates. Go if you think best, and God go with you and keep you from all harm."

As it was thought desirable to make the trip in one day and the morning east-bound express did not stop at Dry Branch, it was necessary for Pennix to go to St. Clair and to leave home early on the morning of his departure.

His mother sat up all that night fixing his clothes and packing them away in his hand-valise, as the old red sack-valise had long since been discarded. Pennix went to sleep early the preceding evening, and slept soundly until two in the morning, when he was awakened and found a hot breakfast. His mother sat down with Pennix, but only sipped a little coffee, and there at the breakfast table they talked the future over. She went with Pennix as far as the gate, where an embrace, a kiss, a "God bless you!" was the parting, and accompanied by John, Pennix rode down the hill and disappeared in the darkness.

On reaching St. Louis Pennix concluded to stay over until the next day, in order to "take in" the theater. He had never attended a theater and had no idea what it was like. So as soon as the doors were open for the reception of the public, Pennix was next to the front railing in "nigger heaven." He watched the performance with keen delight. His hearty laughter and loud cheering would cause the people below to crane their necks to see where

that loud enthusiasm came from and who in the multitude had such a voice. Sometimes the performers would stop and look toward the gallery. Presently a Dutchman came out on the stage and began to warble and dance "*Tola-lie, to-liea.*" Pennix could not now repress his merriment and delight. He sent down cheers and yells that smothered the Dutchman's "*To-lae, to-liea.*" The boy could sing so loud that he was often heard for three miles in the Ozark hills, so imagine that voice in a modern theater! The Dutchman now stopped his French (?) warble and Irish clog, and stood looking upward toward the gallery, when a large man with a star on his coat and dressed in a respectable-looking suit of blue jeans tapped Pennix on the shoulder and said, "Come with me." Pennix told him to go about his business, if he had any, and not to be sticking his nose in other people's business. The man in blue jeans stood there, apparently waiting for Pennix to go, but Pennix made no effort to join him. He then took the boy by the collar and lifted him up; but Pennix jerked loose, and after squaring himself informed the man who was all dressed up in his Sunday blue jeans that he was from the Ozarks, and if he did that again he would have *the chip knocked off his shoulder*; that he did not come there to fight, but to see the theater; for this he had paid his money and he could not run over him. The man in blue told Pennix that he was an officer of the law and that he was causing a disturbance. Pennix told him to jump on one his size and not pick out a boy to try his

law on. Then some of the men sitting close to Pennix explained the situation and told Pennix to go with him or he would be arrested and locked up. This brought Pennix to terms, and he went with or rather in front of the man in blue jeans to the street and then on to the St. Charles Hotel, where the clerk identified Pennix and asked for his release. A protocol was drawn up in which Pennix agreed to take the first train in the morning and not to leave the hotel until he started for the train.

Pennix took the first train out of St. Louis next morning, and was in Jacksonville by ten o'clock, and by one o'clock was on his way in company with a farmer who lived about twenty miles from town. This man was as early a riser as little Davey Greenlee, but would not unhitch in the field or quit work until about the time the chickens flew up to roost.

Many a cold morning did Pennix crawl out of bed and half asleep, with lighted lantern, start for the barn to feed, curry, harness, and clean out the stalls of six horses—all this before breakfast! He mentally resolved that if he ever had any boys of his own that he would see to it that they got sufficient sleep, even though he did not bear the reputation of being the earliest riser and the hardest worker in the neighborhood.

Immediately after the oat crop was put in, as it was too early to commence plowing for corn, the farmer stopped Pennix's pay, and in this way conferred upon him an unintentional blessing.

As Pennix was on his way back to town he began to reflect. He now clearly saw that the life

of a farm hand was one of hard labor, no honor, poor pay, and that it contained no future save and except a life of drudgery. He clearly saw that he must make a desperate effort to get into employment more respectable and congenial.

He concluded on reaching Jacksonville that he would see the superintendent of the county schools with reference to a certificate to teach school. Accordingly, he called upon the superintendent, Henry Higgins, one of the best educators in the State, who advised Pennix to review the text-books which he loaned him and to report at his office within a month or six weeks for examination.

Pennix then hunted a cheap boarding-house, and for four weeks applied himself to his books, working from sunrise to sunset, carefully reviewing all the subjects required in the second-grade examination. One Saturday morning he reported to the superintendent for examination, and on completing it was directed to call again next Monday morning for the returns. Accordingly, Pennix went to the office of the superintendent on the appointed morning, with fear and trembling, but was met by the superintendent with a smile, and with pleasant words of congratulation he handed Pennix a certificate.

Pennix unfolded the certificate, and when he saw the great seal of the State of Illinois, and that he had won a second grade, he almost fell through the floor with intoxicating joy. To have won a third-grade certificate would have satisfied all his ambition, but to win a second-grade came like a revelation and a dream. Professor Higgins then told

Pennix to sit down, as he wanted to talk with him.

"Your technical grammar is somewhat faulty," he said, "but your language is clear and strong. Your writing is decidedly bad, and you must make an improvement on your penmanship before you commence to teach. This you can do by practicing in the copy-books. Your arithmetic is correct all the way through, although you are very brief in some of your analyses. Your history shows that you have been a careful student of Barnes. Your other papers are good, and along many lines in pedagogy you show remarkable originality. Some of your ideas are crude, but you seem to have the chief essential, common sense. And now remember this: all the honor, as well as the money, is at the top, and teaching for a mediocre place is the worst business that I know anything about."

Pennix then shook hands with the superintendent and left the office. Whether he had been favored any in the grading of the papers was a question that he was in doubt about. He was a total stranger to the superintendent, and strangers were not usually favored in examinations for certificates, especially when they came from Missouri.

Before the setting of the sun on the following day Pennix had secured a six months' school at \$40 a month, and was to commence on the first Monday in October. Of course the very first thing he did was to write to his mother about his good fortune.

But his school was not to commence for about

six months yet, and what to do until that time was a question. He had made up his mind not to go back to the farm, and concluded he would look around town and see if he could get something to do.

His landlord suggested that he advertise in the *Courier* for a job of taking care of horses and milking the cows; so Pennix went to the office of the *Courier* with this object in view, but was informed that the paper needed a boy as one of the "devils" to that publication. So Pennix took the place, and with his mate "devil," number one, went on duty and delivered the tri-weekly and did the dirty work. Pennix received the munificent sum of three dollars a week and his board, and had it not been for his school and his certificate he would probably have tried very hard to keep his position, and perhaps he might have some day become an editor himself. In some way the editor of the *Evening Courier* got hold of a letter that Pennix's mother had written to him, and published it without the knowledge or consent of Pennix. The editor paid a glowing tribute to the heart and mind of the writer, but feared that the wholesome teaching that it contained would be but lightly esteemed or ignored altogether by the young man who sweeps out the office of the *Courier*, does odd jobs, and makes the evenings hideous with his mountain yells as he delivers the evening edition. Pennix always kept in his possession the editorial comments and the original letter, which he prized above rubies and pearls. This is the letter:

" My darling Son:

" I received your letter yesterday, which conveyed to me the glad news that you passed the examination and had secured a school to teach this fall and winter.

" You have begun a work, my son, in which I fear you are not fully prepared. I do not say this to discourage you, but that you may fully understand the character of your work and the consequences of indifference or neglect on your part.

" The children will look to you for guidance in all questions of right and wrong, and your life and actions, my son, should be patterned after the greatest of teachers, the Saviour. Then your life will be in full harmony and touch with the children and you will feel as the Saviour felt when he said, ' Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

" Become acquainted with the parents, and talk with them and the trustees whenever in doubt what to do. I would not have you set your opinion above the judgment of those who are older than yourself, but I would not have you compromise with wrong. Combat wrong wherever found and do not be a neutral in this respect. I would earnestly beg of you to avoid all slang expressions. Let your language be refined; refined language denotes the gentleman in most cases. Cultivate pleasant relations with your patrons and never act in a hasty manner. Be sure that you are right before you punish, and then let the punishment suit the offense. See what a good name you can make in the district.

"I believe, my son, that all the science of teaching school is found in the Golden Rule. Try it and see if you don't find it so.

"I fear that it will now be a long time before I see you, but just as long as you are doing well and are happy I will be satisfied to have you from home until your school is out at least. Then you must come right to me.

"The weather is now lovely, and everything looks so green and fresh. The garden is up and looks well, and Johnny has plowed his corn over and is now cutting out the sprouts. Your little colt Selim Ann is looking fat and sleek. She will make a fine mare if she does well and meets with no harm. It is now time to get dinner. Your plate is at its place, and I put it down and take it up at every meal.

"Be sure and write to me every week, and remember that your mother is praying for you.

"May God bless and help you.

"Your affectionate mother,

"HARRIET."

There was a comical genius in the establishment by the name of Dr. Price, who measured six feet nine inches in height and was about as thick as the shadow of a flag pole. One day the alarm of fire was sounded, and the word that Dr. Price's house was on fire spread consternation among the forces of the *Evening Courier*, for all, including Pennix, boarded there.

Every one left the printing plant pell-mell. The

Doctor and Pennix reached the street at the same time, and started down the street "neck and neck," but not step to step.

When they reached the house it was ready to fall in. Everything had been removed from the burning building, and the Doctor's circle was broken. After the Doctor's house burned down, Pennix lost his job in the printing-office and had to look for a new one.

Understanding that a man by the name of Coonrod wanted a teamster, Pennix applied for the position and secured it. Fritz, the son of Henry Coonrod, had secured a position on the Wabash Railroad as a brakeman, hence the vacancy. Pennix's duty was to drive a delivery wagon and take care of the team, delivering anything that he could get to carry. The Coonrods were distinctly Dutch.

When Henry Coonrod and Pennix drove down to the house after the first half day's work and reached the big gate in front of the barn, Pennix started to get down out of the seat and open the gate, but was restrained by Henry.

"My frau vill oben dot gate. Shust sot still mit yourself alreadyt."

Pennix sat still and the "frau" came from the house and opened the gate for them.

The next day she was late in getting to the gate, and Henry read to her the riot act.

"Voch for mine team, und ven you see dot team you shust cumt quick mit yourself, und dot you no kept us vaitin' at dot gate alreadyt."

The next day Henry did not come with Pennix,

so when he drove up to the gate he waited for "dot frau" to open the gate. She was a little late in making connections, and Pennix gave her a gentle reminder not to keep him waiting there at the gate any more. But the next day she did not show up until Pennix called for her several times. Presently the kitchen door flew open and out she popped. Pennix called to her to hurry and she began to trot. He called again, and she began to increase her speed; he then yelled to her at the top of his voice, and she reached the gate at full speed, her dress flying and her hair floating in the breezes. Pennix demanded to know why she kept him waiting so long at the gate.

"Vell, I vos mit de dough und de brodt, und I vas late mit de dinner already, und ven I hurt you call I shust put de brodt in the stove und cumt out shust as quick as I cult. I vill look out already next time ven you cumt und be at dot gate before you cumt already."

The "frau" never sat down with Pennix and her lord at the table, but went from one to the other with a dish, and kept repeating, "Take some, take some," and Pennix usually took some. Henry would ever and anon grunt out, "Shust pitch in," and Pennix did pitch in.

One rainy day when Pennix was shelling corn in the barn, in the exuberance of his spirits he commenced to warble that French warble that he heard at the theater in St. Louis, and then he stepped out on the barn floor and tried to sing and dance, both at the same time, as he had seen the Dutchman do.

Suddenly the barn door opened and in popped the "frau," exclaiming:

"Vot vos up? Vot vos up? Vos you hurtd?"

She carried some bandages and linen in one hand and some liniment in the other, and had come out there prepared to do some Red Cross work. Pennix went on with his clog dance and French warble while she was there, and asked her to join, which she declined to do.

That very evening Henry's son Fritz came home, and Pennix soon found out that Fritz had lost his job on the Wabash and that he wanted his old job back.

The next day Henry called Pennix into his room and said:

"Vell, I pays you off once already; I wants you no more."

Pennix did not want to quit, and thought he would "run a bluff" on the Dutchman, and by spunking up to him he might be able to retain his position; but the Dutchman did not view it in that light.

"You have no reason, Mr. Coonrod, to turn me off, and in this country you can't dismiss a man without cause. Do you understand that? I refuse to go, and am ready to take the team out of the barn and go to work."

"Dis vos a free country already, und I can pay you off shust ven I gots ready, und you can't help yourself."

"Well, I made an agreement to work for fifteen dollars a month and my month is not up, and if you

turn me off you will have to pay me the fifteen dollars, and I will not take a cent less, because you have got no cause to turn me off."

"I hast got some caust already to turn you off, und I vill show you about dot." Holding up his hand he commenced to enumerate the causes for a discharge on his fingers.

"You lost von of me steeks," index finger.

"You danct ven I sent you to shell corn," middle finger.

"You scaret mine frau," ring finger.

"You eat more den both my horses," little finger.

Pennix could not answer such strong arguments, so he took his pay, packed his valise, and went up town to a cheap boarding-house.

At the boarding-house where Pennix stopped was an agent for a large publishing house of Chicago. This agent carried several outfits to fix up other agents and put them to work at once. He offered to fix Pennix up in the map business and give him a few days' drill. Pennix accepted the proposition, and after he had learned his piece, so he could answer any argument calculated to prevent a map sale, he was assigned Peoria County as his field of labor. He started out on what was known as "the six weeks' plan"; that is, four weeks canvassing for orders and then two weeks for delivery of the goods.

Pennix was fairly successful in this work. Some days he would work hard and not make a sale, but the next day he would make up for it by making good sales. One day he worked the houses along

a country road for half a day through drizzling rain and did not take a single order, so he concluded to change his tactics at the next house by representing himself as a deaf and dumb student of the Jacksonville Asylum. Advancing to the front door of a stately country residence his knock on the door was answered by "the lady of the house," who on opening the door shook her head and said:

"No, I don't want anything." She was about to shut the door when Pennix took a pencil and piece of paper and wrote:

"Kind lady, would you give an order for a map to a deaf and dumb boy? I would like to show you the works and get something to eat."

After reading the note she beckoned Pennix to come in. Pennix on entering the room spread the map out before her and her admiring daughters, and pointed out all the attractive features. He then wrote that he would make twenty-five cents discount for his dinner. Presently one of the daughters asked her mother to take the map and the pictures too, "and help the poor fellow out." "The lady of the house" then nodded, and Pennix sat down. The girls said that they would get his dinner and then went into the kitchen. By and by one of them came to the door and said, "Your dinner is ready"; then, as if apologizing to herself, remarked that she forgot that he was deaf. Pennix never let on. Then she came around in front of Pennix and motioned for him to follow her. He followed.

Their ceremony at the table was by nods, signs, and shakes of the head. The two pretty young

girls then commenced talking about the deaf and dumb young man at the table.

"Oh, it is such a pity that he is deaf and dumb!"

"I think so too," said the other.

"Such a lovely complexion, such beautiful blue eyes! But wouldn't I like to have him for my feller if he wasn't deaf and dumb!"

Just then Pennix choked, and they came running to him and began pounding him on the back. The mother came running in from an adjoining room and began rubbing Pennix's nose, with a pressing, downward stroke. Pennix grabbed a glass of milk, swallowed it at one gulp, and after a few coughs and grimaces, sat down again at the table. Words of sympathy were exchanged between the daughters and the mother, who wrote an order for two maps and three pictures. Pennix then arose from the table, shook hands with them, and making a specially low bow to each of the daughters, he went his way.

When he returned to deliver the goods, "the lady of the house" met him at the door and gave him "a piece of her mind." She would not take any of the goods or accept twenty-five cents for the dinner. She slammed the door in Pennix's face. The daughters were not in sight.

Many good sales were lost on account of the screen doors. "The lady of the house" would come to the screen door, look through the wire, shake her head, and Pennix would have to move on.

The screen door stood between him and business, and how to overcome the difficulty was no easy

problem. However, he thought out a plan that promised well. Procuring a stiff piece of wire about ten inches long, he would quietly approach the front door and peep in through the screen. If no one was visible he would locate the screen hook, which was fastened on the inside, push the door tight and give the hook an upward flip, which would open the screen door. Then planting himself squarely in front of the screen door, he would ring the bell or knock on the door. Presently some one would appear, and seem surprised that the screen door had been left open and that a map agent was at the door. The question of a sale was often discussed at the door, Pennix hesitating to enter without an invitation, knowing that an invitation would soon be given. Ever and anon a huge fly would go buzzing through the open door, then another and another, until "the lady of the house" would exclaim, "Come in; all the flies in the neighborhood will be in here if that screen door is left open much longer." Pennix went in and his sales went up.

The next day Pennix called at a house, and when "the lady of the house" came to the door she gave Pennix the benefit of some of the worst language that he ever heard from the lips of a woman. It seemed that a book peddler had been there that spring and talked her old man into buying a large book and paying ten dollars for it, when it was not worth ten cents. Pennix asked if he could see the book. She then showed him the book, which was a well-bound and beautifully illustrated volume of Dickens' complete works. She then showed Pen-

nix some of the "nonsense" and illustrations, "not fit to be seen in any decent house."

Pennix then asked her if she would trade the book for a map, and proceeded to show her how superior a map was to a book anyway: and while he was still talking she interrupted him with the assurance that she was willing to trade but would give "no boot." So Pennix became the owner of a fine volume of Dickens. He understood its value; so did a crippled school teacher, who helped him to deliver the maps and who stole the book, and Pennix could not get it back nor prove that he stole it.

After he finished his delivery of the maps Pennix had had all the experience as a map agent that he wanted, and was glad that it was now about time for his school to begin. Accordingly, he went back to Jacksonville, and after a few days at the cheap boarding-house, during which time he practiced up on his penmanship, he took the train for Woodson, where his school was located.

CHAPTER XVI

THE school for which Pennix had been engaged was located about two miles from the town of Woodson, and the new teacher, according to prior arrangements, was to board at the home of Mr. George Washington Brown, who was rich, as viewed from the standpoint of wealth at that date.

Pennix was received with great courtesy at Mr. Brown's home, and treated like a superior being. He was now "in clover," no fires to build and no chores to do. He could sleep until breakfast was ready. Such a change, such a happy change! But Pennix acted as if he had ever been accustomed to such comforts. No milking, no boss, no long, weary hours of toil and then all manner of chores after the day's work was done. Nothing but his school and his books for six long months! Oh, the world was running over with joy! It was not the tough, hard world that it had been! The skies seemed bluer, the sun shone brighter, the world seemed better, and Pennix was surely happier than he had ever been since he left the wild-woods of his mountain home in the Ozarks.

When bedtime came Pennix was shown his room, and such a lovely room it was, with a heating stove, library, easy chairs, wash bowl, dresser, pictures on the walls, and a rich red carpet on the floor. And

that night he knelt at the bedside, and with tears of joy flowing down his cheeks he thanked God for His goodness to him and prayed for His guidance in the new life just dawning. Verily, it seemed that the words, "I will be a father to the fatherless," were not spoken in vain.

Two events of importance took place while he taught; one was a school entertainment and the other was a temperance speech. In school work, however, it may be said that while Pennix lacked the mellow wisdom of the venerable old pedagogue, yet he in a measure made up for this loss by intense enthusiasm and persistent work, for Pennix was an enthusiast.

The county superintendent of schools was a natural comedian and musician, and would often give free entertainments in connection with school exhibitions. Pennix had his pupils well drilled in their respective parts, and the patrons and pupils were in a state of excitement over the coming event.

Now Mr. Brown kept a barrel of hard cider in his cellar, and just before he and Pennix started for the schoolhouse they went down into the cellar and filled up on hard cider. Pennix had never been brilliant, and he thought that if he would drink about a quart of hard cider he could show the people and superintendent what a smart teacher they had in District Forty-nine.

Fortunately for Pennix, he had a program made out, and all he had to do was to read off the pieces as they came.

During the progress of the entertainment one of

the boys did not bow low enough to suit Pennix, so he stepped out by the side of the urchin, and placing his arm against the diaphragm of the boy and taking the lad by the top of the head with the other hand he bowed him up and down, to and fro for some time, until told to proceed with his speech.

Pennix's part in the exercises being duly closed, the Professor began to sing his songs and to play his fiddle and say his funny things; but by this time Pennix was in too blissful a state of semi-unconsciousness to know just how or when he got through or when or how he got home. The last thing he distinctly remembered was when he fell off a bench with glee at the recital of "Who's There, Nebuchadnezzar?"

This was the first and last time that Pennix sought brilliancy at the hard cider faucet.

There was a temperance meeting held every week at a village church near where Pennix was teaching school, and of course the new teacher was invited to address them.

Interest in the temperance question was then at its height, and many States had passed prohibition laws.

After two weeks' study, research, and recital in his own room, Pennix appeared on the stage before a large audience. But when he got up there and looked over that "sea of faces" his tongue refused to move, his voice would give forth no sound, and his brain was as empty as the realms of space.

He walked back and forth across the stage, as Henry Ward Beecher used to, trying to get his

tongue to move freely. He then turned his face toward the wall and away from the audience, and his mind came back. He never knew where it had been, but supposed it took a pleasant little excursion to the barrel of hard cider in Mr. Brown's cellar.

It came and went in quick succession, and did not know whether it should stay and help Pennix out in a pinch or punish him for trying to make a temperance speech after he had sought to become brilliant on hard cider. After a little more fluttering it settled.

Pennix now began: "Mr. Chairman and—" and he stopped. In his desperation he reached in his vest pocket for his notes. If he could not make a speech without them he would make one with them.

"Mr. Chairman and ladies," he said. "I was going to make you a spontaneous, extemporaneous, co-existing, co-eval temperance address this evening—a speech that had cost me many hours of study and research; but my mind lost its balance, flew the track, and left me a blank idiot. Lest it runs away again I will with your indulgence use these notes which I prepared for just such an emergency as this.

"They contain the principles of the speech which I so carefully prepared and was going to pan off on you as an impromptu effort. They may after all afford a better scope and a larger and freer realm for thought and expression than the set speech with its circumscribed limit."

These remarks, so honestly spoken, and which

everybody understood, created laughter and applause.

Pennix then commenced his speech proper by using the opening remarks of his prepared address:

"I must express to your worthy president the gratification and delight I feel at the unsolicited honor conferred upon me in tendering an invitation to address you upon a subject of deep concern and exciting interest. The triumph of the temperance cause will do more for the amelioration of the human race and the moral betterment of mankind than the success of all political and moral questions."

In closing his speech, Pennix drew an imaginary picture of what this country would be like if all the saloons were closed and drunkenness banished from the land. This was the most beautiful part of his speech, closing with these words, which are yet visible on the old yellow manuscript:

"As sure as there is a God in Israel and a warm heart in the breast of man, the rum power will be overthrown, and upon their wreckage we will build a human monument dedicated to the safety, comfort, and brotherly love of all who live forever and forever more."

Men and women came to him and shook him by the hand, complimenting him on his success in mastering a rebellious mind.

Pennix closed his school with an exhibition that amused the parents, pleased the children, and entertained the public.

He now had about ninety-five dollars, the remainder of his salary having been either spent or sent home. His school closed on Friday, and on the following day he took the train for his old home at Dry Branch, and arrived there in time for a Sunday dinner.

There was the usual gathering on the platform at the village station when Pennix stepped off the train. They looked at him with suspicion, for he was dressed in the height of the fashion. One good old man, who was bolder than his associates, advanced, and after shaking hands with Pennix, remarked:

"Well, I heerd that you had quit work and gone to keepin' skule. S'pose if you kin make a livin' without work it's all right."

"Yes," said Pennix, "I think that I have done my share of hard work, and hereafter I expect to live the life of a gentleman."

"Waal, you hain't none too good to work, unless you hev made a mighty change sence you was here afore. Hev you bin converted?"

"Yes," said Pennix, "converted from hard labor."

Excusing himself from the others, Pennix hurried down through the woods, for he knew that some one was waiting for him at the little cabin door.

He had now been away from home for nearly a year, a year fraught with great interest and of notable success to him. He had advanced from a "farm hand" to a school teacher, whose good will

the patrons sought to cultivate and who had rights that a man is bound to respect.

When Pennix came within sight of the cabin he saw *her* standing in the cabin door. She came running to meet him. Language cannot portray the joy of that mother's heart; the emotion, the endearing tones of her voice; the beaming eyes, though moist with tears.

John came to the gate and took Pennix's other hand, and the happy trio passed in at the open door.

"I heard the train whistle at St. Clair," said his mother, "and at every crossing until it got to Dry Branch. I could not cook dinner, although I tried. I would have to go to the door and listen for the train. Oh, it seemed so long after the train had stopped at the station until I saw you coming, that I feared that you had failed to make the connections. But you are here again. Oh! how we have missed you! But you look so well! You will be my comfort and support in my old age. I know that you are hungry, so I will finish my dinner."

But she would frequently return to Pennix to ask him a question or to tell him something. John said that he had a summer campaign laid out for them, and that he would give Pennix an introduction on the morrow. The dinner was now ready and spread on old but spotless linen; the dishes were as clean and bright as ashes and lye and soap would make them. The corn-dodgers were brown and fine, having been cooked in an old Dutch oven; the milk sweet and rich; the butter cool and pure; the juicy young spring chicken fried fit for a queen's

taste; the apple custard pie fairly melted in one's mouth, and the pumpkin pies were cooked as only the cooks of a quarter of a century ago knew how to cook them, while the peaches and blackberries tasted as though they had just been picked. Such a feast and such a happy group seldom if ever sat at one table!

But Pennix noticed that the year had left its traces upon his mother's brow. There were wrinkles in her cheeks that were not there a year before. There was less tone and strength in her voice. Her movements were less sprightly, her step less steady, and there was an indescribable something about her that told Pennix that she was "growing old."

The following Monday the home-comer took off his new clothes and put on his old ones, now too tight for comfort, and the boys commenced to turn the virgin soil. John had cleared about three acres the preceding winter, and now, with a yoke of cattle, Pennix with a whip, John at the plow handles, they started old "Tom and Jerry," and the excavation among the roots, grubs, stumps, and rocks commenced. For a week it was "Whoa, haw, Tom and Jerry, gee Jerry; whoa back!" with more "whoa back" than anything else.

Pennix dropped the corn by hand while his mother planted corn-field beans with the corn and pumpkin seeds in every other row, John following and covering the seeds with a hoe.

Providence smiled on their labors, and when the green leaves of autumn began to change to russet and gold they found that they would have plenty

of corn and other feed and one hundred bushels to sell; besides plenty of pumpkins, squashes, potatoes, fruits, and berries. Now if the old hens would work as faithfully during the winter as they had during the summer, their grocery supply was assured.

Pennix had engaged to teach a four months' winter term of school near the village of Stanton, and about the time that he commenced his school his mother thought that she would visit her niece. Accordingly, John took her and her cousin Lou to the latter's home on the day that Pennix started his school in the log-house.

They started early so as to make the trip overland in one day. The day was chilly and damp, and Pennix's mother was in such a happy mood that she talked a great deal. The next morning her throat was sore, but it was nothing very serious, and so John came back with the team, as his mother was to return home on the train.

She remained there for several months, and seemed to get steadily worse; but in the spring she made some improvement, and Pennix went down and brought her home on the train. But she was yet feeble and scarcely able to wait on herself. With the coming of spring she rallied and grew considerably stronger.

Pennix took lodging and board at the Stanton Hotel, where he had the pleasure and good fortune to meet a Dr. King, who had been a surgeon during the war, and was the most learned man that Pennix had met. He was a Republican in politics, but had a weakness more characteristic of a Ken-

tucky Democrat. Had it not been for this weakness or failing he would have remained at the top of his profession where his training and scholarship placed him. He had been and could be a king among men.

The Doctor would buy a *Globe* one evening and Pennix would buy a *Republican* the next evening, and the paper was taken to the supper table. The Doctor had his office and room in the hotel, and would have his meals brought to his private dining-room, and he insisted on Pennix having his six o'clock dinner served with his, and then they would go over the daily paper. It would indeed have to be an urgent case that would take the Doctor away from his six o'clock dinner. He believed in good things to eat, and was a king of *bon vivants*.

They would read aloud by turns any remarkable incident or political event that came up for discussion. The Doctor had passed many years at the National Capital and was personally acquainted with some of the greatest men in American politics. He knew the history of the great political parties "like a book," and his comments on the trend of events, both current and past, was instructive and delightful. He was a Republican through and through, and while he failed to convert Pennix, his teachings inculcated a more liberal and generous opinion in the mind of the young man relative to the purposes and platform of the Republican party.

On one occasion the *Globe* contained a whole page of telegraphic news about the Ohio Legislature, which had on the preceding day elected James A. Garfield as a United States Senator. The edi-

torial page had devoted a column to the public services and life of the new Senator, but not a word about him being an available candidate for the Presidency.

Presently the Doctor folded the paper and filled his "Missouri meerschaum" with "long green," a native plant of the hillsides, and fixing himself comfortably in a great cushioned arm-chair, began to smoke and to think. Presently he began to talk about Garfield. He had served under his command during the war and knew him well, and he related many pleasant and a few pathetic reminiscences of those trying days, and gave to Garfield his full meed of praise.

At last he jumped up and exclaimed:

"By the gods, Pennix, he will be the next President! No better man could be named, and when the people know him and understand his beautiful life they will elect him sure. Yes, the Republican party will nominate him and the people will do the rest. He is to-day the greatest scholar and the best man in American politics. James, James, I salute you as the second Abraham Lincoln."

"No," said Pennix, "your party will never again elect a President. The crime of '76 must be avenged. Samuel J. Tilden will again be elected and this time he will be inaugurated."

"Tilden is too old," said the Doctor; "and while he may have been elected President, his party cannot be trusted with the reins of government. Besides, Garfield will be the President of all the people, and will not discriminate against any Democrat

if he is a patriot. He has the biggest brain and the warmest heart of any man in the world. I will tell you, Pennix, that as a statesman, orator, and scholar he has no equal on earth."

"Well," said Pennix, "my party has never stolen a President and repudiated the will of the American people. Besides, the 'Sage of Gramercy Park' is not only a statesman of the highest mold, but a brave and honest man. The 'people' will see to it that the greatest crime of the century will be corrected. Tardy justice, but better late than never."

After Garfield had been elected President, Pennix recalled the Doctor's prophecy.

Pennix's walk to and from school was along the backbone of a high ridge that separated the Mernec and Bourbeuse rivers, affording one of the most beautiful landscape views in the country. It was especially lovely in the autumn, when the leaves presented a panorama of variegated colors and tints over the lower valleys on either side.

The log schoolhouse was located between the county wagon road and the "Frisco" Railroad, and was nearly obscured from either highway by trees and bushes. The scholars were about half Germans and nearly half native Missourians, with a few descendants of "Old Ireland." A harder combination than this could scarcely be found on this continent of America.

A school may be taught successfully where all are Germans, or all Irish or all Missourians, but put them in the same school and they won't mix.

How to assimilate and harmonize the racial antagonism was a question that gave Pennix no little concern, but the public school has an appetite like an alligator and the digestion of an ostrich in taking the riff-raff of the Old World, and by a sleight-of-hand performance, an act of legerdemain, converts them in a short time to full fellowship.

The very first day there was trouble on the playground. A little Missourian tantalized a little son of "de Fodderlant" by shouting "sauerkraut" at him. Pennix brought the two up before him and explained to them in a way that both could understand that they must live in peace, one with the other, when at school. The next day the contagion spread, and more extensive trouble arose, involving some of the larger boys. On one side were the "Pukes" and on the other the "lop-eared-bologna-limburger-cheese-sauerkraut Dutchmen," while the Irish were about evenly divided in their sentiment, and a few French children who had recently moved in the district from St. Louis were, according to the tradition of their country, very friendly to the Missouri side, thinking no doubt that they were Americans.

Pennix assembled the school and went over the situation, but he could clearly see that his remarks made but a fleeting impression. Scraps and trouble were multiplying on the playground, and it was evident that the boys would soon determine who would be boss on the grounds, the "natives" or the "Dutch."

One pleasant afternoon, after school had been

dismissed, eleven natives, thirteen Dutch, three Irish, and one French boy met by mutual consent at a certain place in the woods to determine whether the "Missouri Pukes" or the "lop-eared bologna hogs" would be boss on the playground of the Pleasant Ridge school. Pennix did not have a suspicion of what was going on in the woods near the schoolhouse until a wood-chopper on passing by and realizing the situation came to the schoolhouse and reported the engagement. Pennix and the wood-chopper ran down to the battlefield and quelled the rebellion.

The situation was quite comical. Here were two on the ground and almost covered up in the leaves, but struggling and kicking for the mastery; there was a boy up a tree, taking in the sights; two sparring across a log; some had chips on their shoulders and were bantering their adversaries to knock them off; but the bulk of the belligerents were engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter or were rolling on the ground locked in a close embrace or pummeling or being pummeled. Many bore marks of the conflict, while such epithets as "Puke," "Sauerkraut," "Limburger," "Lop-ear," and other expressions too numerous to be repeated, with an occasional scream or an oath and a medley of unknown tongues, punctuated the scene of conflict.

Next morning Pennix said to the school, "All who were in the fight yesterday will take the recitation seat." Twenty-one came forward for the recitation seat. Pennix then gave them just such a talk as would be expected from a pedagogue un-

der such circumstances, then the hazel bushes sang a merry song, commencing with the oldest and finishing with the smallest. Five of the largest were sent home with the injunction to return to school next morning, and Pennix understood that they got another whipping when they got home. It was high noon when the teacher got through with the performance, but so thoroughly did he administer punishment that there was no more trouble on the playground from that source.

The school closed in February, but Pennix and the patrons were not well pleased with it. He was glad to get away and to stay at home during the spring and summer.

Meanwhile, Pennix's mother became gradually weaker, and the boys found that she needed better care than they were able to bestow. Therefore it was decided that she had better go to her daughter Laura. Her illness was of a lingering nature, and her life might be prolonged even though she could not be restored to good health again. She was at this time quite weak, and had been living largely on medicine and stimulants. Pennix accompanied her on the trip to her daughter's, and provided her with the best possible traveling accommodations.

They reached their destination in due season, and she seemed much improved by the trip. In favorable weather she would take a cane and walk about the yard and garden, and seemed to enjoy the outdoor exercise. But it was apparent to all that her malady was now beyond the reach of medical skill.

The doctors gave no hope of her recovery, but would not express an opinion as to how long she would live.

It was said of her by "Brother" Rush, who performed the marriage ceremony, that she was the most beautiful bride that he ever married, and he was a venerable divine in the Methodist Church at the time; but Pennix knew her only in middle life and in her old age. She was rather large and inclined to be fleshy, with clear full eyes, fair skin, and brown hair. She was well educated for that day, and decidedly intellectual, and one of the most entertaining conversationalists that Pennix ever knew. Though a zealous member of the church, she would never shout at church or pray in public, nor talk in public except to her Sunday-school class.

Uncle Peyton, who was a Virginia gentleman of the old school, said of her, "Harriet is by all odds the smartest woman that I ever knew."

Well, she came of an intellectual family. One of her brothers, Franklin Patton, was one of the best scholars in the church, and by the direction of his church he was authorized by the National Conference to write a profane and sacred history of that religion which was accepted as their recognized history. Two other brothers became immensely wealthy and eminent in the practice of medicine, while another brother received, when he graduated, the most distinguished honors that the Wesleyan University could bestow.

Poverty, which few women can endure uncomplainingly, was no hardship to her, as some of her

happiest days were passed in the little log cabin near the village of Dry Branch.

One characteristic which Pennix always emphasized and mentioned as her most distinguishing characteristic was her honesty with her children. There was something that stamped her above all other women that Pennix ever knew. Her weakness, if it may be called such, found expression in her inordinate love for her children, especially her two young sons, whose training largely devolved on her. She would frequently punish after a fashion, but the threatened punishment would result in a kiss and a pardon.

Suddenly and without further warning her illness became more serious. She now knew that the time had come for her to take her departure from earth, but she was ready. In fact, she was prepared for such a change at any time in her life.

Folding Pennix in her emaciated arms she whispered:

"God will bless you, my noble son."

With endearing words for all her children, and with the word "Susan" upon her lips, she sank into silence, and as the sun went down she passed into the sunlight of her God.

She was dead. The hand that had wiped away the tears of boyhood and soothed the troubled brow was pulseless and cold. No more would that gentle voice be heard in prayer at the trundle-bed or speak words of comfort and encouragement to her sons as they were trying to make a name and attain a place in the busy world about them.

CHAPTER XVII

PENNIX now decided to take a course in a business college. He felt that it would occupy his mind and perhaps divert the grief that was gnawing at his heart.

His mother was dead, and regrets and sorrow were equally vain and distressing. Nourishing his sorrow would only undermine his health, blight the activity of his mind, and unfit him for the duties and usefulness of life. He had tried to do his duty as a son, and had no remorse over duty unfulfilled. He knew that she wanted him to be a useful member of society, and he would now try to observe her wishes more earnestly than when she was living.

Thus thinking, he went to Keokuk, where about the first thing he encountered was the measles. His landlady put him in a dark room, and for several days he was isolated and left to live or die, survive or perish, as luck might have it.

One morning he found himself weak and hungry. He called aloud for something to eat, but the landlady would not respond to his summons. At last he heard the dining-room bell ring, but he did not know whether it was the dinner, breakfast, or supper bell; but after it rang for a long time he concluded it was for breakfast. The rattle of dishes made him ravenous.

Throwing a quilt over his shoulders, with faltering step he wended his way into the dining-room, where the boarders were at the table. The landlady raised her hands in horror, but the boarders,—mostly medical students—gave him a cheer and told him to be seated. He partook freely of a good breakfast, which made him feel strong and well. He then washed up, put on his clothes, and after paying his bill hunted another boarding-house.

Next morning he enrolled as a student in the business college. His record as a student was not a success, but the lad was not cut out for a business career. He did not have the natural qualifications for a dry goods clerk, neither did the sedentary life of a bookkeeper answer the requirements of his intensely active nature. He wanted something more exciting, perhaps even fraught with danger. Again, there was an unpleasant incident connected with his course that influenced him in no small degree to discontinue his course at college.

One of the students by the name of Smith was terrorizing many of the others, being notably cunning and quarrelsome. One afternoon a number of students, including Pennix and Smith, went down the steps together, and after lingering a few moments at the foot of the stairway, Pennix stepped out on the street, but had not gone far when some one called his attention to a red handkerchief which was pinned to his coat-tail. This infuriated him, and he immediately returned to the foot of the steps and demanded to know who pinned that rag to his coat. No sooner had Smith said he was the man

than at it they went, and after a few passes they were both in the street. The president of the college appeared on the scene just then and parted the belligerents. Both were worked up to the fighting point, and so neither one was satisfied with the result. The papers next morning made mention of the affair, giving Pennix praise for resenting the insult. Before school assembled the next morning Pennix was invited by Smith to go into the sparring-room and settle the matter.

The invitation was accepted, referees were appointed, fighting costumes donned, and hostilities were ready to begin when the president entered the room and invited the belligerents to his office. A part of their tuition was refunded and the two dismissed.

Having no home but Missouri, Pennix now resolved to anchor his hopes in Clark County, just across the Des Moines River, where he engaged to teach the last vacant school in the county. The term was completed without incident; the friends he made there were among the best people in the county, and ever afterward spoke of him with praise as a teacher and as a man. But Pennix was not entirely satisfied with the life of a teacher. When in the work he gave it his zealous, enthusiastic support; but there were many disagreeable features, notably, change of location and uncertainty of tenure of office, and more or less work of an effeminate character.

He then determined to learn telegraphy, and decided that after he became proficient therein he

would abandon the teacher's profession entirely and work for a "soulless corporation." As he understood himself, he believed he would succeed as a railroad man.

Accordingly, the agent at Wayland gave Pennix permission to stay in his office, but told him he must not disclose his identity when any official was around, as the agents and operators had orders not to take in any students. Pennix had but a poor chance to learn, and there was no one to practice with him, and the wire work was heavy with regular business; but he made some progress, especially in station work. Fall came, and he could not get hand on the key, so he taught the Bartlett school for that fall and winter, six months. It was considered one of the most desirable country schools in the county.

The school was large, the district strong, and the country about was rich in agricultural products. No richer or more prosperous or better people dwelt on the face of the earth than in and around Wayland, and it was Pennix's good fortune to win their esteem and confidence, and in years to come Wayland was "home" and he knew he was among friends when he was there.

Pennix now devoted himself to telegraphic work, but still had time to take part in ball games, go hunting for ducks and squirrels, or gig the big buffalo-fish which would come up Fox River during the high waters in the spring; or go swimming or seining with the crowd. One day, while a dozen or so men were seining in Fox River and when it was roaring with a heavy volume of water and a half

hundred spectators were on the bank, Pennix heard the cry:

"Go to Wylie, he will drown!"

Pennix at the time was in the middle of the river, but on looking toward the shore he saw Wylie struggling to keep his head out of the water, while a big negro was holding on to his shoulders and pulling him under. The man thought that he could swim, but on getting into deep swift water was washed out and under like driftwood, and Wylie, in seeking to rescue the son of Ham from a watery grave, had been seized by the drowning man and both were sinking. As soon as Pennix took in the situation he yelled to Aleck, who was standing on the bank:

"Bring a pole here quick, Aleck!"

Aleck came running with a sycamore limb about six feet long, and Pennix told him to wade in as far as he could, but keep a solid hold with his feet. Pennix then swam by, catching the stick in one hand and Wylie with the other, and brought them safe to shore. Pennix will never forget the look of appeal on the face and the expression in the eyes of his friend as he swam by in the circle and hauled them in.

The coon was still safely perched on his back, where he remained until the shallow water was reached, then he dismounted and waded out. Wylie was so exhausted that he had to be helped up the bank and carried home, and that ended the seining for that day.

Pennix was a fearless swimmer, and had on two

prior occasions saved his associates from drowning: once, by plunging into the deep water and seizing the hapless youth by the hair and holding him at arm's length until safe on shore. The other time the boy was too far gone to help himself, and Pennix had to roll him over a log in order to get the water out and bring back the spark of life. But that spring Pennix came very near going down in the Keokuk Canal. He and some other boys were in the water, and Pennix concluded he would swim the canal. So he went out and was heading for the other bank, or wall, which divides it from the Mississippi. When nearly across he was struck by cramps in his arms.

He was probably two hundred yards from the Keokuk shore, and there were no boats or other help in sight. But just when his arms would no longer bend and the water began to settle around his neck and commenced to run into his mouth, a happy thought struck him.

He simply flopped over on his back and swam out, frog-fashion. But he could not swim back, and nothing remained for him to do but to run down the embankment to the water-locks and cross at the gates and go back and put on his clothes. Of course he had to violate the city ordinances, but he was not interrupted. He saw only a few people, and they got out of sight as soon as they could.

It was on the Fourth of July that Pennix took his first train order; he had been left in charge because the agent had been excused for the day. At

about two in the afternoon Pennix called up "De" office for orders for the work train which was then at "Wd." The order read as follows:

"Order 31, F.M. De. To Eng. C. & E. engine 146 Wd. Engine 146 (one forty six) Fox condr. will run from Wayland to Centreville keeping out of the way of all regular trains. 12 J. G. S."

Pennix repeated:

"Order 31 Wd. to De. I 13 Eng. 146 (one forty six) Fox condr. will run from Wayland to Centreville keeping out of the way of all regular trains. Sig. Fox condr."

"Correct. 204 P. M. J. D. De," came from the "De" office.

Pennix then replied:

"O. K. P."

After this little transaction, which seemed to Pennix at that time a mighty affair, he locked up the office in regular agent's style.

The following August the agent took a month's leave, and Pennix ran the station. That month was an unusually busy one for the road. Wood, cucumbers, and tomatoes by the carload were shipped to Keokuk; cattle and corn to Peoria and Chicago; and watermelons to western Missouri points. But Pennix never made a serious blunder, either in wire work or in his accounts; in fact, his record was clear in freight and ticket business, and he had been able to dispose of a heavy wire work. But not knowing whether he would be able to secure a permanent position on the road he engaged to teach the Luray school as principal for the ensuing year.

After the agent had returned and found everything all right Pennix decided he would run down and spend a short time with his brother John, who lived in the Ozarks; but it was a mistake that he left just then, for within a few days came the message:

"Dec. 7 Pennix Wd. Will you accept the night office at Ms? Ans. J. G. S."

The agent wired a negative reply and signed Pennix's name.

The next day came this message:

"De. 8 Pennix Wd. Will you accept the station at D? Ans. qck. J. G. S."

The agent then had to inform J. G. S. that Pennix had gone and was somewhere in the hills of the Ozarks, beyond the reach of messages. Pennix was sick at heart when he came back and found that the Downing station had been offered him. It was suggested that he should wire J. G. S. for a position if there was anything in sight, but Pennix had promised to teach the Luray school and would not go back on his word.

Pennix was an enthusiastic Cleveland Democrat, while nine-tenths of the patrons and pupils of the Luray school were Republicans. The agent, too, at "Ra" was a Republican, and would not copy the bulletins of the election, but extended to Pennix that privilege, which Pennix eagerly accepted. One Friday afternoon Pennix copied from the wire the famous bulletin from the chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee which directed the local committees and clubs to go ahead with the ratifications, as Cleveland's election was now assured.

Luray that night was luminous and hilarious. Big bon-fires were kept burning all night. The guns (anvils) throughout the night were answered by the guns of Granger, Fairmont, Wyaconda, and other points. Toward morning some of the boys became so full of "enthusiasm" that they threw their raiment into the fire. It was a wild night, but full of good fellowship and genuine rejoicing on the part of the Democrats, and the Republicans thought in the later hours of the night that a change of administration would indeed purify the political atmosphere.

On Election day Pennix, using the two rooms of the school, designating one room as the Senate and the other as the House and the scholars as Senators and Representatives, went through the process of an election; beginning with the primaries and holding the various conventions, electoral college, and finally declaring the result in a joint session of the two Houses. According to this election Blaine and Logan were elected.

Previous to the election Pennix had the honor of entertaining that illustrious statesman and patriot, William H. Hatch. Pennix met him at the train with a bus and conveyed him to the Davis hotel, where a good fire and comfortable accommodations awaited him. He and Pennix talked late into the night, and the following afternoon he spoke at Shores' Hall. Pennix adjourned the school in honor of the occasion, not for the sake of politics, but to teach the young to take an interest in the political affairs of our country. The distinguished

visitor appreciated the honor shown him by the school, and gave the students an address before taking up the political questions.

That fall Pennix was appointed principal of the Alexandria public school, where he met with still greater success in school work. The parents had, however, in preceding years exercised too great an influence over the teachers, thus weakening discipline and encouraging pupils in wrong-doing.

The school board instructed Pennix to run the school on business principles and not to be influenced by outside pressure. On the very first day he had occasion to punish two of the largest girls, who reported the chastisement to their parents.

That noon, as Pennix was returning to school after dinner, he was first met at a street crossing by one of the indignant fathers, who demanded to know the cause of the punishment of his daughter.

Pennix tried to explain, but no sooner had he begun his explanation than the irate father grabbed him by the collar, and doubling up his fist fixed to give the teacher a good thrashing. But Pennix had not chopped cordwood and split rails in the Ozarks for nothing, and his adversary was soon on the ground, and Pennix punished him severely. The news flew over the town like wildfire that Tom — was after the school teacher. A man from Wayland, Bill Cooley, was down town when the news reached the crowd. He threw a ten-dollar bill on the bar, and said, "I will bet this against five that Pennix whips." Of course his ten was immediately covered.

Pennix's adversary had been a powerful man, was feared by all, for when he fought it was with a vengeance to carry his point and protect himself. Let it be said to his credit, however, that he continued sending his daughter to school, acknowledged his mistake, and caused no further trouble.

CHAPTER XVIII

AFTER the close of the school at Alexandria Pennix returned to Wayland, but his friend the agent having resigned and gone West, a new agent had taken his place. Pennix felt lost, as Wylie's home had been Pennix's home for several years, and the depot office was where he liked to stay. The new agent, Mr. Sam Davis, informed Pennix that he could still stay in the depot and make his home with the family. Pennix thought this very kind, but concluded to accept the joint offer of the Melon-growers' Association and go on the road and sell melons at different places in the State and adjoining States. The first trip took him to Kirksville, Missouri. Before leaving Wayland, however, the agent handed Pennix a letter of introduction to his father-in-law, the Rev. David Hollister. Arriving at Kirksville Pennix visited some of the local merchants and made sales of his car of melons. As soon as Pennix opened the car he picked out a half dozen of the best melons and sent them down to the residence of Mr. Hollister with his compliments, his letter of introduction, and a note stating that he would call that evening. After the sales for the day were delivered Pennix went to the hotel, donned his best suit of clothes, ate a light luncheon, and then went in quest of the Hollister residence.

He was admitted by an elderly lady of sedate and dignified bearing. Mr. Hollister soon came in, and later other members of the family came in, one by one, and were introduced to Pennix. Presently Mr. Hollister went to the door of a small room, in which Pennix heard the hum of a sewing machine, and said, apparently to the one at the machine: "Come in and let me introduce you to Pen Pennix of Wayland; he is a friend of Sam's." At this the machine was shut down and the sewer came to the door, and on seeing Pennix, exclaimed:

"And you are the watermelon man? Glad to meet you. Those were fine melons you sent us. Do they raise many such melons down where you live?"

"They raise them by the acres and car-loads, but they are not all such fine ones as I sent you."

Just then supper was announced, and Pennix accepted the invitation to drink a cup of tea. Hattie, the sewing-machine girl, led the way and Pennix followed.

After supper, Hattie, Harry, and Pennix went out under a large locust tree, and were later joined by Mr. Hollister, who brought the evening paper for Hattie to read to him.

"My eyes are not as good as they once were, and with your permission I would like to have Hattie read the paper, as is my custom," he said to Pennix.

"Nothing would please me better, Mr. Hollister, as I have not had time to read the paper to-day, and there are several things going on that I am interested in; notably, how the Prohibitionists are mak-

ing it in Iowa, and if the city authorities at Keokuk have closed the saloons of that city."

"I join hands with you, my man, on that platform. That is my politics."

At this juncture Hattie said her time for reading was short, and that Pennix and her father could talk prohibition all night if they so chose. Pennix then moved to another seat directly in front of Hattie, where he could get the sound of her voice to better effect and study the girl as she read. As she read, Pennix listened, and watched her with increased interest. Her voice was clear, her pronunciation distinct, the tone natural and melodious. She was apparently about twenty years of age, neither lean nor fat, dressed in a neat-fitting black skirt and red waist, with a red rose pinned to the lapel of her waist. Her face was rather round and her features regular, her complexion rosy and rather dark, and she gave evidence of strength, resolution, and a contented, active life.

But it was not these characteristics that held Pennix's attention so much as her eyes and hair. Her eyes were full and as black as eyes could be; her hair was as black as her eyes. When she looked Pennix full in the face there was a strange expression; it was not a stare or a search, but an expression—a thought—shining forth in gentle effulgence. When the twilight fell Hattie excused herself and went back to her room, and in a few minutes Pennix heard the hum of the machine.

Mr. Hollister then informed Pennix that he was conducting a meeting and invited him to go, but

Pennix excused himself on the ground that he had some letters to write. They then shook hands, and with an invitation to call again before leaving town, Pennix started for the hotel. But letters or no letters, Pennix wanted to hear that man preach, so he concluded to go, and write the letters in the morning. The church was the largest one in Kirksville, the congregation was a large one, and the sermon was remarkable for its vigor and originality.

Next morning Pennix was up early, wrote his letters, ate his breakfast, and was down town as the stores were being opened. He sold the balance of the melons and telegraphed for another car-load.

He had the car of melons unloaded by the middle of the afternoon, and as the other car would not arrive until the night of the following day he concluded to go down and see Mr. Hollister and talk prohibition with him; but Dr. Brooks was there, who, by the way, was a more important personage than Pen Pennix, and as they were in close conference all afternoon and evening Pennix did not see much of Mr. Hollister. However, Hattie had either finished her sewing or laid it aside, for she was busy in and out of the kitchen, and would come into the parlor once in a while and talk to the "water-melon man," as she termed Pennix.

Pennix was introduced to Dr. Brooks, who was billed to lecture that evening on prohibition, and as the entire family attended, Pennix had either to go along or return to the hotel.

The two gentlemen were in close conference in a

room near the front porch, and their low tones could be heard but not understood. The rest of the family were making preparations for attending the lecture. When the evening paper came Pennix took it and went out under the locust, and was sitting there reading when he felt the presence of some one, and looking around he saw Hattie standing there.

"I have come out to hear you read. Now proceed like a good little boy. I had to read for father last evening and you would listen, so now you must read to me."

Pennix mumbled an excuse that he never read aloud, but another request brought him to his senses and he replied:

"If you will grant my request I will read a few lines to show you that I do know my letters."

"You will have to state your request before I consent to such an agreement," she replied.

"Well then, my request is not an unreasonable one, I hope. May I accompany you to the lecture this evening?"

There was no verbal answer, but Pennix understood, and before she could make reply he was rattling off an article about an imaginary trip to the North Pole in a balloon. After reading about half a column Pennix inquired if she was ready for the lecture.

"Yes, in a minute."

Hattie then disappeared in the house, returning in a few minutes. They did not go direct to the lecture hall, but walked in a leisurely way through

the beautiful quiet streets, then out to the Normal grounds, and on to the lecture hall. Hattie did most of the talking, and related her experience in attending the Normal, and how she regretted that she could not finish the course, as she lacked only one year of graduating.

The following afternoon Pennix hired a buggy and took down to the Hollister home two choice melons. He was determined, if he could, to talk prohibition with Mr. Hollister, but, as before, Dr. Brooks was there. So Pennix and Hattie drove out to a grove near by, returning in time for luncheon.

The following evening Pennix went down to see if they had a message for Sam, and that night he left Kirksville for Macon, where he had another load of melons to deliver.

Making quick work of the sale of melons in Macon, Pennix caught the freight train for Kirksville, where he contracted for a car of melons for future delivery, and then went down to talk prohibition to Mr. Hollister. On approaching the house it appeared as if the family were away from home, but a light ring at the door was answered by Hattie.

"Well, if it's not the watermelon man! Come in."

"Yes, I am on my way back to Wayland, and thought I would call and see if you had any word to send Sam."

"Father and the family have gone to the country to a funeral, and I am alone this afternoon, working on a picture."

At this remark Pennix looked in the corner of the room, where near the window and beneath a half-raised curtain was an unfinished crayon portrait.

"I admire your work, but not the subject," said Pennix.

"The portrait is not a good one, but the old lady will pay me well if I make her a good picture. You notice that she wants it life-size, and all the wrinkles and warts effaced. It is somewhat tedious work, but I enjoy work of this kind."

Pennix looked at his watch and saw that it was time for him to go in order to catch the evening train.

"Well, Hattie, I must go. What word do you wish to send Sam?"

"Tell him we are well and that father expects to go down and see him in the fall."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, all that I can think of now."

"Can't you come, too?" inquired Pennix.

"Possibly I may go with him, but I cannot say at the present time. Father has gone wild on prohibition. He has mortgaged the place to raise money to carry on the campaign against the grog shops, and we will have to raise the money when it is due or lose our home. I am sewing and painting as hard as I can, and putting away every cent in order to meet the debt. It is certainly a task, but it must be done."

Pennix wondered how much the debt was, and came very near asking the amount and offering to

lift the mortgage; but he concluded to make no inquiry or comment.

"Well, Hattie, I wish you well. You have my sympathy and respect, and if at any time I can render you a service, 'ask and it shall be given, seek and ye shall find.'"

Some two weeks later Pennix asked the melon association if it was time to deliver the other car at Kirksville, but was advised that the car had already been delivered and there was no prospect of any more business there this season.

On receipt of this information Pennix wrote to Hattie that he would not be in Kirksville very soon, and requested the pleasure of her correspondence, a favor which was granted.

The melon season being now closed, Pennix went to Alexandria, where he had been reëlected principal of the public school.

CHAPTER XIX

PENNIX had been in communication with the Chief Signal Officer, Washington, D. C., and one day received a letter which informed him that if he would report there and pass the physical and mental examination he would be enlisted. Having conferred with the school-board, who reluctantly consented to his absence, he wired the Chief Signal Officer that he would report within a few days. Another teacher was appointed in his place temporarily, and Pennix took the train for the capital. There were about five men wanted in the service at that time, and seventeen applicants.

The mental examination came first, the time allowed being eight hours. It embraced all the common branches, letter-writing and original thesis, and the principles of meteorology and telegraphy. The next day came the physical examination, where the young man was severely tried. The oculist said Pennix had the best eyesight of any one he had ever examined. Accordingly, Pennix was accepted, and after a few days in Washington he was transferred to Little Rock, Arkansas.

Pennix was delighted with the new life, and threw into the service all the enthusiasm of his ardent nature.

One day Pennix received an invitation from the

captain of a steamboat then plying between Little Rock and Fort Smith to take a trip with them up the river, and Pennix availed himself of the opportunity. The boat traveled only during the day, tying up to the bank at night, thus affording a good opportunity to see the country along the Arkansas River. Pennix stopped off at Dardanelles, however, to visit his uncle, Dr. Franklin Patton.

For six months Pennix had done hard work at the meteorological station at Little Rock, suffering off and on from malarial influences, and he was jubilant at the reception of orders transferring him from Little Rock to Fort Laramie, Wyoming. He started for his new station immediately.

For about a hundred miles northeast from the capital of Arkansas he passed through a swampy, marshy region, and whenever the train stopped the voices of many frogs were heard, holding high carnival. Weary from the labor and excitement of preparation for the trip, Pennix fell asleep, and did not wake up until the next morning as they were entering the "Future Great." Poor connections delayed our traveler in St. Louis until night, and the following morning he was up at daylight just as the Wabash train reached Chillicothe, Missouri. It had been raining during the night and the morning was cloudy and damp. From observation and careful inquiry he ascertained that northwestern Missouri and western Iowa rejoiced in a bountiful crop of oats, wheat, hay, good pasturage and a fair yield of corn, although the corn crop had been reduced to an approximate yield of about thirty

bushels to an acre on account of the dry weather. Leaving Omaha at night, Pennix failed to see the agricultural region of Nebraska, but from inquiry he learned that crops were good in all eastern and central Nebraska. The Union Pacific Railroad in western Nebraska lies in a basin with nothing to be seen on either side but sand-hills, villages of prairie dogs, bunches of scrub cactus, a few small herds of cattle, and some isolated frame or sod houses where settlers are trying to cultivate the unresponsive soil. There was an occasional view of the Platte River, which is murky, shallow, and full of quicksand. A remarkable feature of the river is that most of its water runs beneath the surface. Farming is more successful upon the prairie away from the railroad. Timber can be obtained at distances ranging from forty to seventy miles, and strange to relate all the timber used for fuel or building purposes is hauled that distance.

About the middle of the afternoon the heavy train was puffing across the high plains of eastern Wyoming. This prairie is one of the most wonderful in the world. Its elevation is over six thousand feet, with an almost inappreciable slope toward the south and east. Bleak and brown, it extends almost into the infinitude of space, or until it meets the sky.

The route from Cheyenne to Fort Laramie was via the Cheyenne and Northern Railroad and Black Hills stage line.

The C. & N. will be famous in the future, not for its picturesque scenery, but for its rugged and

desolate state. Desolation is written upon every hillside and summit, looks down from every far-off mountain peak and range, and is reflected by the intervening plains. The scenery, however, varies and changes in all respects except in its awful barrenness and solitude. There are high cliffs overhanging deep canyons and dark caverns, high naked hills covered with rocks, or a mountain far away on the arid plain is wrapped in its own solitude. It is a region of gently undulating sand hills, which, viewed from a distance, resemble waving grain or Lake Michigan in a storm. There are isolated hills with diminishing diameters to overhanging summits; perpendicular strata of alternate layers of brown and light-colored rocks; high, whitish hills of alkali sand; bluffs and peaks, crags and cliffs, canyons and caves, mountains and plains, above, below, on the right and left, to the van and rear, everywhere and always, now and forever, one and inseparable!

The only living creature seen between Cheyenne and Chug Chug was a crow, and if he did not have his haversack and canteen well filled he certainly would go hungry and thirsty before he crossed over. At Bordeaux, eighty-four miles north of Cheyenne and the terminus of the road, the company relished a very good fifty-cent dinner, and, the stage being crowded, Pennix took a seat by the side of a corpulent Englishman on top, and it called to memory David Copperfield's journey by stage. After a drive of four hours across a sandy region they came in sight of Fort Laramie, nestled in a valley at the

junction of the Laramie and Platte rivers, with the Stars and Stripes floating high above in bold relief. Next day Pennix bade his predecessor good-by, and entered the office to "pound brass" for Uncle Sam.

About five full companies of infantry were stationed at Laramie. These soldiers were well drilled, well fed, clothed and quartered, every nation in Europe being represented. The post library contains standard works on history, science, fiction, art and literature, and daily newspapers and magazines are kept on file. Bath-houses and a day school are provided by the Government. In fact, the common soldier enjoys more luxury than half the citizens. Some few improve the excellent opportunity for culture, while others smoke their pipes and live a life of indolence and ease. The band gives open-air concerts twice a week, and the officers encourage every laudable effort toward elevated manhood.

Soon after Pennix reached Fort Laramie he was promoted by the Chief Signal Officer for good services. The next year he was put in charge of the dismantlement and construction of military telegraph lines in Wyoming and Nebraska, and was promoted to the position of chief operator and commended by the Chief Signal Officer for marked ability in special service.

One afternoon a telegram from the commanding officer at Fort Robinson announced an Indian outbreak, and requested the coöperation of the military authority at Fort Laramie in suppressing the outbreak and bringing back the renegades. Soon

after this the wires between the two military posts became "dead." This condition alarmed the commanding officer, who immediately concluded that the Indians had destroyed telegraphic communications between the forts. On reporting the facts to the commanding officer Pennix stated that if he was furnished the proper escort he would restore communications before daylight. The commanding officer said that it was a desperate undertaking, but that he would furnish the escort if Pennix would go.

The bugle call "Boots and Saddles" echoed along the banks of the Laramie River, and within a very short time the cavalry, properly armed and on good horses, with a good horse for Pennix, who was in command of the detachment, started for the scene of the trouble in the dusk of the evening.

The horses were put at a good trot, and across the trackless plains of the West they disappeared. It was a beautiful moonlight night, clear and frosty, and the night air was exhilarating. About thirty-five miles from the post they discovered the wires had been broken. Pennix, dismounting, handed the reins of his horse to one of the soldiers and proceeded to splice the broken wire. Just then some dark, moving objects were seen across the plains. Pennix immediately mounted, and a conference was held with the quartermaster sergeant, who, by the way, was an old and experienced Indian fighter. It was decided if the moving objects proved to be hostile Indians to give them battle if need be, using the horses as a breastwork.

All was now silence and suspense as they sat there in the moonlight, ready for action, waiting for the nearer approach of the advancing objects. Suddenly the word "Halt!" rang out in clear tones. The command was obeyed, and the challenge "Who comes there?" was uttered. "Friends," was the reply. "Advance, friends, and be recognized."

On riding up, the supposed Indians proved to be the Sixth Cavalry from Fort Robinson. After a few minutes' conversation the Sixth Cavalry passed on in search of the Indians, and the detachment under Pennix returned to the fort, reaching there after daylight and reporting to the commanding officer the reestablishment of telegraphic communication. The commanding officer personally commended Pennix for his work.

Pennix remained at Fort Laramie about two years, at the expiration of which time he was ordered to proceed without delay to Fort Verde, Arizona. The following is Pennix's description of a part of the trip:

"We left Cheyenne, 'The Magic City of the Plains,' on a bright October morning en route for Fort Verde, Arizona. The country for the first fifty miles, half way to Denver, is a vast desolate plain, with scarcely a spear of grass or shrub to relieve the arid waste, over whose broad expanse the antelope, jack-rabbit and coyote roam, and the prairie dog, rattlesnake, and hawk dwell in the same hole.

"From Eaton, Colorado, to Denver irriga-

tion prevails, constituting a complete and perfect system, a net-work of ditches, which has redeemed that country from an arid waste and made it one of the finest agricultural districts in the world. Here man has overcome the uncertainty of crops on account of droughts, and at his pleasure the soil is supplied with water. Nowhere in the small grain-growing districts of the States touching the Mississippi River has the writer ever seen a greater number of stacks and ricks of wheat and oats, and in no agricultural country better residences and barns, or a better improved, more prosperous, thrifty country than this part of Colorado.

“The country between Greeley and Denver is in a high state of cultivation, and is an object lesson for the irrigation committee. We were fortunately delayed at Denver several hours, and utilized the time by driving over the city with an old citizen—if any citizen in Denver can be called ‘old.’ The writer had long wanted to see Denver, and his opportunity had at last arrived. It was a perfect day, and for six hours we went from one interesting place to another more interesting. In fact, the whole city is one of concentrated interest to a stranger. The chief characteristic of Denver is its bewildering activity. Such palatial residences, beautiful yards covered with blue-grass, shrubs and flowers, imposing business houses, broad, shady streets, well-paved, smooth, broad walks, seemed to be more like a dream or fable than reality. And we saw about fifty gigantic structures going up, the purposes for which many of them are intended

our escorts were as ignorant as ourselves. Chicago is generally conceded to be the representative city of American enterprise, and the writer had this opinion until Denver was inspected. Denver has reached the acme of American go-aheadism or spirit of 'get there, Eli.' The influx of Eastern families and Eastern capital is astonishing in its immensity. Fabulous prices are paid for choice locations, and the demand for real estate is incredibly heavy, but the building area is unlimited. Denver, with her excellent system of public schools, magnificent churches, superb parks, salubrious climate, inexhaustible mineral wealth and a vast area of fertile soil, and millions of acres yet to be redeemed, all tributary to her interests, with palaces nestling among her own shade trees, and all beneath the awful shadow of the Rocky Mountains, with Pike's Peak as a huge watch tower, will fulfill, as a city, the highest earthly dream of the most enthusiastic patriot of our country.

"It was nearly midnight when we left the hotel for the Union Depot. The street cars were still in motion, as they run all night. Laborers were working on the streets in the illumination of the electric lights. Many stores and shops and all saloons were still open. In fact, there seemed but little diminution in the tide of humanity that had surged to and fro all that day. Weary from sight-seeing, we sought a sleeper on the Santa Fé train and were soon in slumberland.

"At La Junta, Colorado, we breakfasted, and changed cars for the South and West. Between

La Junta and Trinidad intervenes one of the most extensive and arid plains of the West, nearly three hundred miles in extent. After crossing the La Junta desert the traveler is ready to try the Trinidad desert. Attaching another engine to the heavy Santa Fé train we moved slowly up the mountains, and after passing through a tunnel at the summit of the range, we entered into the light of day and New Mexico. For the next three days we feasted our eyes upon the scenery of New Mexico and Arizona. Here it is: an isolated mountain, resting like a pyramid upon a vast desert and surrounded by its own solitude; a series of gently undulating hills, strongly resembling the waves of an ocean in a storm; isolated hills having pyramidal bases with cylindrical bodies, which diminish toward the top and there change to overhanging plateau summits; perpendicular strata of alternate layers of brown, gray and red colored rocks; whitish hills of every shape, angle and dimension, resting on a sea of alkali sand; bluffs and peaks; crags and cliffs, canyons and caves, villages and plains, seas of white lava cinders and forests of pine and cedar; mountains of blue and mountains bare and brown; Mexicans, Indians, and Americans; dobes, wigwams, cabins, and mansions; mines of gold, silver, iron ore, and coal; the Cliff-Dwellers' caverns and their boneyards; springs, cataracts, rivers, are a few of the interesting features of this wonderland."

CHAPTER XX

FOSSIL CREEK, which Pennix explored in due time, has its source somewhere in the depths of the Mongollon Mountains, and after winding its way through queer, rocky formations, chaparral, deserts and sand hills, empties into Salt River. This creek is well worth exploring, as the water has a peculiar property of turning everything it comes in contact with into a fossil or into a state of fossilization. Pennix placed several objects in the water, and noticed that in some the object was turned into a fossil and in others there was a hard coat of alkali formed on the surface. A leaf, however, was thoroughly fossilized or petrified. The water has a peculiar white-yellowish tinge and emits a faint odor. It is entirely destitute of all animal life, and in fact it is so cloudy with minerals held in solution that one is unable to tell just what it does contain, but it is reasonable to suppose that any form of animal life would not long survive when submerged in it.

Montezuma Ruins is so named on account of its dilapidated condition and the supposition that it was one time the home of the Aztec rulers, probably of Montezuma himself, who was driven into Mexico on account of the fierceness of the Cliff-Dwellers. The ruins are situated on an eminence that has a wide, level, treeless region all around,

the walls that remain standing being of mud and from ten to twelve feet thick. From the pile of ruins lying around the base of these walls one would conclude that the building at one time was several stories high. The interior bears evidences of smoke, as if the occupants made a fire whenever they felt so disposed and at any point that suited their convenience. The rooms are very small and the walls very low, indicating that the occupants were a diminutive people. The ruins are circular in shape and built apparently on the inside of a hill or eminence that declined to a center where was located what probably is the largest spring in the world. In fact, it cannot properly be termed a spring, as it is no less than three hundred yards in diameter and circular in shape. The water is clear and cool, and evidently has its source in the melted snow of the San Francisco Mountains, in the northern part of the territory, and is the source of Toltec Creek, which empties into the Gila River.

Arizona contains many poisonous reptiles and venomous snakes. Rattlesnake Gulch is said to be alive with rattlers. Tarantulas are common but not vicious, and they will seldom sting except in self-defense. They often coil up close to a person who is asleep, and then if they are rolled upon will apply their stingers and teeth, hissing and whizzing, "Lay over." They also like to build their nests in one's clothing and weave their web across the top of a shoe, but their natural habitat is a hole in the ground.

The centipede is quite venomous, and it has been

said that there is a poisonous ooze exuding from its pores, and that if it crosses the flesh poison will set in. This is an error, for one night Pennix was awakened by a centipede crossing his naked arm. No poison set in, but Pennix set in after the "pede," and within a few minutes had him in a bottle.

The "Gila monster," so named because found in the sand of the Gila River, is like a small crocodile in shape, but has a sandy, dirty, freckled appearance. It varies from a foot to two feet in length, and can scarcely be detected from the sand in which it makes its bed. Its bite is certain death. There is not an instance on record where a person bitten by a Gila monster has survived many hours after the venom of its fangs penetrated the flesh.

The skunk of southern Arizona is a dangerous and cunning foe. Its bite will produce hydrophobia, and there is no cure for skunk hydrophobia except at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and New York. Fortunately, skunk hydrophobia does not develop inside of three weeks, thereby giving the victim a chance for his life. Pennix was well acquainted with a ranchman who lived in Verde Valley who was bitten by a skunk. The ranchman was sleeping at the time "on the range," when he was suddenly awakened by a skunk which had him by the nose. The man jumped up and yelled like a Comanche, but the skunk held on like a turtle, and it was only when the skunk was choked to death that it relinquished its hold on the man's nose. Its bite made an ugly, lacerated flesh wound.

The ranchman concluded that the bite would not result seriously, and beyond bandaging the wound with tobacco and drinking copious draughts of a Kentucky snake cure, he paid little attention to his sore nose for about a week or ten days. Then he became impressed with the thought that there was a probability that he too would go as all other victims of the skunk bite had gone who had not immediately departed for New York or Paris to be treated. Thus thinking, he settled up all his earthly affairs, bade farewell to his wife and children, and came to the military post, where he placed himself in the care of the post hospital. Hydrophobia developed within three weeks, its approach and development being quite gradual. As he was a personal friend of Pennix, he was at his bedside as much of the time as his duties would permit. From Pennix's innermost soul he sympathized with this man, for he had broken bread at his table. His was a brave and manly heart, for he looked at death steadily and never flinched.

The last few hours of his life were pitiful and terrible beyond description. He was changed from the thoughtful, conscientious man to that most reprehensible varmint, the skunk. He would bark and bite, double up, scratch the wall, and go through all the antics of a skunk.

The post surgeon came in to see him about ten o'clock that last night, and gave some directions to the steward how best to protect himself and the attendants. "He will last about two hours longer, but those two hours will be desperate ones," were

the words of the surgeon as he left the ward. In the last struggle there were six men holding the poor fellow, one holding each leg and arm, one holding his head, while the sixth man was on his knees across the madman's chest. The venom was exuding from his eyes, nose and ears, while his mouth was filled to overflowing with white foam and froth. Convulsion followed convulsion, until, with a last mighty contraction of the muscles, he fell back in death's merciful embrace. Pennix was by no means a timid man, but it took all the courage that he could summon to help this man through the death struggle.

Women are very scarce in Arizona, and when one dies from insanity or other cause the loss is felt throughout the neighborhood. But do not suppose that there are no women amid her mountain fastnesses or along her water courses, for there are, and some of the finest women that can be found in any land are here.

Once Pennix stood by the bedside of an Arizona woman and saw her pass from a state of sanity to insanity. She had been in ill health for a long time, and she was soul-sick and tired of eternal solitude and the lonesomeness of her desert home.

It happened in this way. Pennix was awakened one night by the sentinel, who informed him Mr. — was there and wanted him to go to his home with him at once; that Mr. B—— had been put out of his house by his wife, whom he thought was crazy. Pennix could not refuse to go, so he and the hospital steward jumped into the wagon, and

after a half-hour's ride were at the home of the mad woman. On entering the house they found the woman on the bed, moaning and groaning and talking in the Mexican tongue. As no one on the place understood that language, an interpreter was sent for to catch "her last words." When the Mexican came to report what she was saying it was most amusing as he interpreted her "last words."

"A gent living over the Rhine
Swiped stuff from a woman's clothes line;
But many things there this gent couldn't wear,
Though he liked them so fine."

The woman then began to pray in English, as she was equally well educated in Spanish and English. At last in her ravings she went to heaven, giving a good account of the country on her trip, and after she entered the pearly gates she began to sing and shout and give joyous exclamations as she met those that had gone on before, calling them by name. About this time she looked at those who stood at her bedside, and it was apparent that she was a lunatic. Her husband thought the worst was over, and went to her and commenced to call her pet names, but she became so frantic that she had to be securely fastened in bed.

Arizona is not entirely destitute of Christians and religious services. Pennix heard of a "meet-in'-house" way up in the Verde Valley, so he and his friend, the post surgeon, were off at daybreak, the meeting-house being about twenty-five miles away. The post surgeon, Dick, was fresh from the effete East and desired very much to see the

West. He had often expressed a wish to see some of the country and people in the valley, and had said that he had not witnessed an amusing incident during his stay in the old post, and Pennix was the more anxious on that account that he should find something to give spice and pleasure to his stay.

The meeting-house was reached just before the services commenced, and on entering Pennix observed a large, respectable gathering of men, women and children; the men, or at least part of them, wearing their range suits, spurs, chappes, quirts, and boots. The benches were turned to face the door, and the preacher's stand was by the side of the door and across it, which of course was open.

The preacher was dressed in a faded Prince Albert, no doubt his wedding suit, which had been brought down with him through the passing ages. He was feeble, toothless, tall, slender, swarthy, wore a long black beard, and his head was as bald as "Bald Knob."

He was of the Baptist faith, a faith which seemed to flourish in spite of hot winds and dry weather. He took up his position across the front door, with his fat, red-headed, cross-eyed wife on his left. Pennix and Dick found seats near the front row of benches, and directly in front of the preacher's wife, who with her husband faced the congregation.

In due season the preacher took a fresh chew of tobacco, and was then ready to proceed. He began by informing the people that "when he got wound up there was no telling when he would run down." He would punctuate his sermons by fre-

quently spitting out of the open door. He possibly believed in the "open-door" policy.

He began his sermon by saying: "There was once a woman that had a man that was a king. This king said that some men must perish, but this woman said 'No,' and she went to these men unbeknown to this king and said, 'If I perish, I perish, ah.' Then there was great rejoicing among these men; they thought of their weeping wives and children [spit], and the cool shades of summer; the ice cream parties [spit]; the fishing along the babbling brooks [spit], and all the goodies of Christmas time. And she said, 'If I perish, ah, I perish, ah.'"

During this time the preacher's wife never took her eyes off Pennix and Dick. There she sat, coiled up on a low rope-bottom chair, with her snakelike eyes fixed, and without as much as a wink or change of position she glared and gazed, and gazed and glared.

Pennix bit his lip and thought of every misfortune that he could recall, but to no purpose. Finally Dick took a violent coughing-spell, and left the house with Pennix close to his heels. They could stand it no longer, and jumping into the buckboard and putting the whip to their mules, they were soon on their way back to the fort.

The annual "tournament" is to the average Arizonian what the County Fair is to the country girl, or a World's Fair is to the cosmopolitan.

First and foremost in importance at these tournaments are the races, not in a circular ring within

a high wall inclosure to keep out those who have not the funds to buy a ticket, but in a straight line one mile long and as level as a floor, with parallel tracks. There was no entrance fee, but a free pitch-in to all horses of the same age. The ladies' races formed a very important feature of the tournament, and how her ladyship would smile when the blue ribbon was pinned on the bridle-rein of her panting steed as she sat there bicycle fashion on the backbone of her mustang, with her hair still swaying in the breezes!

Everybody bet on his favorite horse, and the women were among the heaviest bettors. It was no uncommon thing to bet fifty steers on a band of cayuses. One family that Pennix was well acquainted with lost all their cattle except what they called a "nest egg," but they did not seem to care. If they won it was all right and if they lost it was all right.

The next notable feature of the tournament was the riding of the wild, bucking cayuses. They were blinded until the "buster" was seated in the saddle, then the blinds were removed, and the cayuse would commence bucking and bawling. Sometimes the mustang would go bounding and bucking off across the plains, and keep up the bucking and running until it fell from exhaustion, and the "buster" would come in carrying his saddle and riding-outfit, or some of his friends would follow him up with another mustang for him to ride back on after the first mustang was through with him. Several of the mustangs in their desperation would

rise up on their hind legs and fall backward. This would bring the "buster," who would get back on the mustang as it arose. One large horse, more desperate than its fellows, bucked up and down for ten minutes, while the "buster" had the rowels of his spurs buried deep in his hide. The blood oozed from the nose of the cowboy and gushed from the nostrils of the mustang, and it seemed doubtful which would last the longer, when the mustang laid down on the ground and rolled over, and in so doing got away and struck out across the plains. Then several cowboys followed up, and in the course of three hours returned with the riding-outfit, having lassoed and tied the mustang in order to remove it.

The "steering committee" of the tournament had put about fifty steers in the corral, and were to give good prizes to the best "cowpuncher"; that is, to the one who would rope and tie a particular steer the quickest. First, second, third and fourth prizes were given, and prizes to any who could do this job securely within five minutes. The cowboys, or "punchers," sat on their cow-ponies near where the steers were turned out of the corral. The steers were turned out one at a time, and the name of the puncher was called as the steer with his banner high in the air would start at full speed across the plains. Almost immediately the lariat would circle above the head of the cowboy, and with a singing whistle reach for the feet of the steer, which was running at full speed. As it stepped into the loop the cowboy would jerk his rope, and

the cow-pony and puncher would have rope connection with the steer. Then the cow-pony would make a swift, short, circular run, and then stop still with its feet extended in front. When the steer came to the end of the rope it would tumble over on its side, then the cow-pony would pull back like a mule, and the cowboy would jump from his saddle, run to the steer now lying on its side, and tie its fore and front feet together, and the steer would be as helpless and as completely tied as chickens intended for Methodist camp-meeting.

When this act of legerdemain was completed the cowboy would raise his hand and yell "Safe!" same as in baseball, and the judges would then record the time, and go and inspect the job.

Fifty-three steers were in this way dumped and scattered over an area not exceeding twenty acres. How long did it take these Arizona cowboys to overtake, throw, and tie those steers? The longest time was three minutes and fourteen seconds; the shortest was twenty-four seconds, and the average less than one minute. Pennix has since that day seen horsemanship and cowboyship, but nothing to compare with this. Only once did he ever see anything approaching it, and that was on the plains of Wyoming, where a young woman gave chase to a band of cayuses, and on riding through the band lariatied the one she wanted without perceptibly decreasing her speed.

CHAPTER XXI

PENNIX remained at Fort Verde about two years, at the expiration of which time he was transferred to Salt Lake City, which in many ways is the most desirable city to live in west of the Rockies.

As every one seems to know all about Salt Lake and the Mormons, it may appear that nothing new can be said on that subject, but the writer does not hold to this opinion. It is true that a great deal has been written and said in regard to the city of the Latter Day Saints as well as the Saints themselves, the most of which is false. But the writer is a lover of justice; having suffered injustice many times in his life he proposes to raise his voice and use his pen in favor of truth and the eradication of error and wrong whenever it is his opportunity so to do.

When the Edmunds law went into effect it made it a felony to practice polygamy. Polygamy is wrong, wholly wrong, without a redeeming feature, but there was a strong tie of affection existing between the husband and his wives in the majority of cases. The Mormon women were usually devoted to their husbands, not by reason of love, but their devotion was a religious duty. Pennix was among the Mormons when this law went into effect, and he knew of many husbands that had to scatter

their wives over the territory. Now it is quite natural for the husband to go and see his wife and children; he could not abandon them without cause or provocation on their part, so it has been alleged from that day to this that polygamy still exists in Utah.

Any man that took more than one wife after the law against polygamy went into effect should be made to suffer, but if Pennix had been a polygamist at the time the prohibitory law went into effect he would have done as most Mormons did, look after the wives and children. Do not for one minute believe that the writer would defend polygamy or the system of Mormon religion. He condemns the former and would not accept the latter; but for the sake of truth, justice, and right he will tell what little he knows about this much-persecuted people.

Many sensational books have been written about the Mormons, and written by people that never knew a Mormon in their lives. These books were written to sell regardless of truth and justice, and are misleading and mistaken, seeking to stultify every principle of common decency. Pennix knows from his own experience that a kinder, more merciful or humane people do not dwell anywhere within the United States than these same Mormons that some writers have represented as being as treacherous and bloodthirsty as the Apache Indians and as immoral as Henry VIII.

It is not true that they will follow him who divulges the secrets of the church, but it is true that the church has secrets known only to those in the

highest positions; this is also true of many secret orders. Yet it does not follow in either case that these secrets are of an infamous character and fraught with danger and death to those on the outside. One notable feature of the Mormon doctrine is the absence of the orthodox hell; but whether this is a good or a bad feature it is not in the province of this book to discuss.

Another feature of the Mormon Church which commends itself to every good man or woman, a feature so commendable in its nature and praiseworthy in its object that every Gentile church may herein learn a lesson, is the protecting care the church gives to its young girls. Strange as it may seem, Mormon women do not abandon the path of purity and duty and take that other trail that leads to sin and shame. The cardinal feature of the church is to provide every marriageable woman with a husband, and if need be it will make the match, just the same as some scheming mothers do.

A person listening to an educated Mormon preacher would not know the difference between his sermon and that of a Baptist or Methodist, except perhaps in the frequent reference to the "Apostle Smith." Again, this church agrees that if a Gentile will become a Mormon and live according to the creed of this church, that all the friends of the convert, dead, living, or yet to be, will make their "calling and election sure."

The Mormons have, however, a kind of purgatory where the bad Mormons must dwell with the Gentiles until the Apostle Smith can intercede and

get them out, and the worse the Mormon the longer he would have to dwell with the Gentiles. Every Mormon is expected to pay a "tithing," one-tenth of his income, into the coffers of the church. This is mandatory, and no Mormon can expect to enjoy full fellowship here and escape purgatory unless he contributes the ten per cent. Nothing can be said in favor of such a tax, but it has built the most costly tabernacle and magnificent temple in Salt Lake City that can be found in Christendom or heathendom.

Divorces are rare in the Mormon Church, but in exceptional cases a divorce has been granted by the president. Pennix knew one lady, then in middle life, who when a girl had married an old man. Life soon became a burden to her, and she applied to the president of her church for relief. Brigham Young investigated the case and granted the divorce which she asked. In after years she married a good man near her own age, and was the mother of an interesting family when Pennix knew her.

Dancing is a religious feature of their church and a part of their education. Every Saturday afternoon the children assemble at a hall or the church house and receive varied instructions; sometimes it is a lesson in dancing and sometimes a literary exercise from the Catechism.

Pennix once attended a village dance not far from Salt Lake City. The dance was held in the church house, the loose seats having been removed and the floor properly tallowed. Before the dancing began one of the bishops made a surprisingly

good prayer, closing with a chant in which all joined. The dance was also closed with a prayer. The old and young joined in the dance. There were grandmothers and grandfathers on the floor, and often the grandfather would dance with the granddaughter or the son and mother would dance together. One old man danced around, but he could not swing, as he had to depend on a cane for support. The Mormons are without doubt the most graceful dancers on the face of the earth. Their system of dancing is not like ours. Theirs combine many schottisches, waltzes and quadrilles not known to the Gentiles, and they know how to dance them.

The Mormon Tabernacle at Salt Lake will seat thirteen thousand people, and the construction enables the falling of a pin to be heard from the pulpit to the farthest end of the edifice when there are but a few people present. The roof is of oval shape and sustains itself, but a few large pillars go from the solid earth to the high and heavy dome above. Every good Mormon is expected to make an annual pilgrimage to this modern Mecca, a gathering of the faithful. Pennix attended their annual convention and saw about fourteen thousand people in the Tabernacle. All the standing-room was taken. Preaching at such times begins with the rising of the sun and continues without intermission until late in the night. When one preacher gets through or "runs down" another takes his place. Pennix has seen no less than four preachers preaching at the same time in different parts of the Tabernacle,

each preacher having several thousand auditors. It was considered no discourtesy to enter the Tabernacle or leave it during the services.

The Tabernacle is supplied with one of the largest, if not the largest, pipe-organs in the world, and music is a very prominent part of their worship. The singing is usually by the choir, which consisted of two hundred and fifty voices at the time Pennix attended, which, with the deep musical notes of the organ, filled that vast cathedral with melody unsurpassed in any temple of worship in America.

The "Temple" to Pennix was a mystery; it was not completed at that time, but the church was at work with "rush orders" trying to have it ready for Brigham Young to occupy when he arose from the dead after forty years' sojourn in the grave. But the forty years have come and gone and Brigham has not shown up yet. He was to reign and to "reign victorious over heaven and earth most glorious," but he is behind time. Possibly the Temple may be "to let" if Brigham, who has the preference, does not want it.

There are several other smaller buildings on the Tabernacle grounds, which are in some mysterious way connected with their code of baptismal and marriage rites, but these, like the Temple, are shrouded in mystery.

Pennix visited the tomb of Brigham, which was inclosed in a high iron railing. A soldier, not one of Uncle Sam's, was there on guard. Pennix gave the countersign, but received no recognition in return.

The Mormons welcome the Gentiles to their territory. This sweeping statement may be doubted, but it is true. Of course they are better pleased if the Gentile will join the Mormon faith and become one of them, but many a Mormon awakes to find himself rich by reason of the advance in real estate. Furthermore, as teachers and in other lines of employment, the Mormons favor the Gentiles. They would invariably favor a Gentile teacher when the free-school system was established. They believed in education, but the saddest and most distressing influences of polygamy were made manifest in the children. They were victims of a religious—no, I will not defame the word “religious,” but a marriage system that brought them into the world; a system that, according to the laws of nature, left its mark upon them as plainly as the mark of Cain. There were many Mormon children as bright and happy as the children of Gentile parentage, but in the houses where polygamy existed in full force and effect there were too often seen the effects of wrong marriage relations.

The “Salt” weather station was first-class in all respects, using those meteorological instruments that are only used in a first-class station. These stations are designated in the telegraphic reports by one word. If the city name is one word it is used, but if more than one word it is abbreviated; thus, “Salt” for Salt Lake City, “Rock” for Little Rock, Arkansas. The work at “Salt” was heavy and the station was behind in its work, and the Washington authorities were urging the completion

of certain data that they needed in making out the record of the station for previous years. As Pennix had been down in the alkali deserts of torrid Arizona for nearly two years, he was not in vigorous health when he reached "Salt," and as the work required ten hours every day except Sunday, he did not improve very fast. A month's leave having been denied him, he concluded to quit the service. He tendered his resignation, which was duly accepted, and he was then at liberty to go and do as he pleased. He wanted to see the Pacific Coast country, so he bought a ticket to Portland, Oregon, where he arrived within a few days, and where he remained a few weeks, waiting for the weather to clear up so he could go out and look at the country. He stopped at the Merchants' Hotel in Portland, a rendezvous for nearly all the people coming into the country and passing through. Here he met many people going to and coming from the Puget Sound country, and there seemed to be more coming from than going to that country. It kept on raining and snowing, for it was in the month of February, and Pennix finally concluded that he did not want any of that country in his anyway, and at heart he wanted to go back home. So one rainy morning he purchased a ticket via the "Sunset Route" for poor old Missouri.

CHAPTER XXII

At last Pennix was back to his old home among people whom he loved and who loved him. During the preceding years he had corresponded with his sweetheart, Hattie Hollister, conscious of their mutual love and hope.

Pennix knew that the Hollisters had moved to the State of Washington, and knew that the old gentleman in particular was not satisfied with the conditions of the Evergreen State. He hoped to return to Missouri to remain for the short period that in accordance with nature's law remained for him to live. They were in straitened financial circumstances, and it was becoming a harder struggle as he advanced in years.

One day in early fall Pennix received a letter from his friend Sam Davis, then agent at "Ra," informing him that his father, Mr. Hollister, and Hattie were at "Ra." To say that this news was surprising and pleasant would be putting Pennix's feelings in a mild form. He answered that he would be up to "Ra" on the following Friday evening. Pennix at this time was principal of a ward school in Kakoka.

Accordingly, on Friday afternoon Pennix took the evening passenger for "Ra." The meeting was cordial in the extreme, but there was evidently some barrier between him and Hattie.

She was in splendid health, her cheeks glowed like the western sunset sky; her eyes were as dark and as full of life as they were in the long ago. She seemed so joyful, so glad to be back "home." If she had changed, it had been for the better. She had that rarest of qualifications, that of radiating peace and contentment over all who came within the zone of her magnetic influence.

Pennix remained at "Ra" until the following afternoon when he returned to Kakoka. Sunday morning he went over to the home of his friend J. M. Dawson, who was then a promising young attorney. "Mose," as he was commonly called, and Pennix were bosom friends. They consulted together on all subjects affecting each other's weal or woe. Mose knew of Pennix's love for Hattie and promised any assistance within his power. It was at last thought advisable to drive to "Ra" that afternoon, as Mose, too, had a sweetheart in that village, and a client that he wanted to see.

Accordingly, a good rig was engaged, and shortly after noon Mose and Pennix were on the road that led to "Ra." They called on Mose's client, who delayed them for quite a while. Then they drove to the hotel, ordered supper, had the team cared for, and at the proper time went to the church where Hattie and Mose's sweetheart were in the habit of attending. Here they met numerous friends, who by their marked attention showed how welcome they were at "Ra."

Before the services commenced, Mr. Hollister, Hattie, Sam Davis, and his family came in, and

were seated directly in front of where Pennix, Mose, and his sweetheart were sitting. Introduction followed, and all were soon seated on the one bench, Mose sitting by Hattie.

After the services were over, and after a few minutes' chat with their friends, Mose and Pennix drove rapidly away. Mose, who claimed to be a good judge of women as well as of horses and the law, opened the conversation.

"Pennix, she is certainly charming, and it is not strange that you are enamoured. It would be an easy matter for me to feel as you do if in her presence much. Her eyes sparkle like diamonds, and her voice beats the band."

"Yes, Mose, what you say is true; but what did you talk about, and did either of you say anything about me?" inquired Pennix.

"Indeed we did, old boy. Didn't you see her turn her head several times to look at you? I am of the opinion that she was thinking more of you than the services."

"Well, Mose, do you remember anything in reference to me that was said?"

"Yes, several things. She wanted to know at once if we were in the habit of attending church often at 'Ra,' and if the services were not better at Kakoka?"

"That was a pointed question, don't you think? How did you get around it?"

"Well, I told her that I often came to 'Ra' to attend church, but that you usually attended meeting in Kakoka Sunday evenings. I told her that

my trip was more business than pleasure or piety, and that you had come as company."

"Your answer was about the right thing. How was it received?"

"She wanted to know if I was in the habit of mixing clients and sermons? But I had one chance of making a hit in your favor."

"How was that?" Pennix asked.

"She wanted to know how long I had known you, and I told her for many years, and that I loved you like a brother. I looked her full in the face when I said this, and noticed that she was pleased with the remark. Let me tell you, old boy, that you may not win your case in a day, but when her opinion is handed down it will be in your favor. There is something that I have not ferreted out, something that holds her in abeyance; just what it is I do not pretend to know. I am no mind reader, but will venture the prophecy that her mind is about made up and in your favor."

During the following week the play "The Old Homestead" was the attraction at the opera-house, and Monday evening Mose came over to Pennix's room to talk over matters of various kinds, and in the course of conversation wanted to know if he had ever seen the play? Pennix told him that he had seen it played in Salt Lake City.

"Well, Pennix, I think we had better go to-morrow evening."

"All right, Mose; but don't you think it would be a good plan to take the young ladies? You know that a good show often has a good influence."

It was agreed that the girls should be invited to attend the play on the following Thursday evening, and that Pennix should call at Mose's law office Wednesday evening, when further plans for the evening should be formed.

The play, as Pennix predicted, had its mellowing effect, and the occasion was one of pleasure and comfort. The barrier that seemed to be between Pennix and Hattie passed away.

Mose left Pennix with Hattie while he himself drove to the home of his sweetheart. Pennix could delay the matter no longer, and determined to know his fate. Taking her hands in his, he told her the story of his love, how he had waited for her, lived and labored for her through the past years, and now was waiting to take her to his home as she already lived in his heart.

"You know, Hattie, that I have loved you throughout these years, you and only you. With that love I hold in my heart a feeling of respect and honor that I have felt for no other that I have ever known. There is so much in common that drew us together. Our lives in some respects have been alike. You have cared for your father and I for my mother. I know that you love me, Hattie. If you did not I would not urge you to become my wife; but knowing that we love each other so well we should not deny ourselves the greatest happiness that we can ever know. Tell me that you will be my wife and God will bless us both. Oh, Hattie darling, speak!"

Pennix held her tenderly in his arms, and felt

the beating of her heart as she struggled to master her feelings. When she could speak, her answer was the comforting one that has been so often spoken before and will continue as long as the divine endureth in the human heart.

"Yes, Pennix, I love you, love you better than I dare own. I have loved you ever since we met. I have struggled against this love, but without avail. I have been true to this love, though at times I thought it vain. I love you, and I believe in you. Here is my hand. You already have my heart."

Mose learned that night of the status of the case, and his congratulations were earnest and sincere. Pennix felt like a new man. The world was full of joy; there was nothing inanimate in Nature. Friday evenings found Pennix at "Ra," Sunday nights found him at "Ra," but Monday mornings at his desk. The wedding day was fixed at the earliest date consistent with the importance of the event. Pennix felt he could not wait for Mose and have a joint wedding.

The question where to make a future home came up for consideration, and at Hattie's request it was decided in favor of the State of Washington, for her mother and sisters and brother lived there. Their entreaties and repeated requests to come could not be ignored or disregarded by the tender-hearted Hattie.

The wedding was a pretty one, and solemnized by the rituals of the Church of Christ. Friends gathered at the depot to bid farewell to Pen Pennix

and Hattie, and as Pennix and his bride stepped aboard the Santa Fé train it was no exaggeration to say that Pennix was the happiest man on that train. There could be no concealment of the fact that there was a newly wedded couple on the train, for Pennix's ardent nature involuntarily betrayed him.

Pennix and Hattie decided to visit the Pacific Coast country before they settled down; accordingly, among other places visited were the Puget Sound cities.

Having had a little trip, and being agreed that they had seen enough, and feeling inclined to settle down and begin the ordinary work of every day life, the bridal couple went to the city in eastern Washington which was to be their future home.

The Hollisters lived just on the outside of the city, occupying a small frame house on the banks of a small stream. The home bore evidences of hard times, very different from the happy circumstances of former years. Pennix was not surprised that Mr. Hollister himself had returned to his old home. Mrs. Hollister showed age and feebleness, but there were still traces of her former beauty; Jessup had grown to womanhood, and was tall and slender, with large gray eyes, brown hair, and a jovial disposition, and Kato was a fat, healthy young lady who had a smile for all whom she met. The boy, Dickson, had in preceding years met with an accident that rendered him partially helpless. He was, however, a young man of more than ordinary ability, and handsome in spite of the traces of suffering on his countenance. Onell had married sev-

eral years before this and was the mother of three children. Caledonia was a little, unfortunate girl, ten years old, but no larger than an ordinary child of five years.

But poverty and hardships were for the present forgotten in the happy reunion. The following week Pennix looked at several of the many residences of the city listed for sale, and purchased a beautiful home in a choice location.

The house was immediately vacated, and Pennix and his wife moved in. Within a few days the Hollisters moved in, and here they lived during the next few years, Pennix making it his headquarters when he was in town. Let Pennix relate in the next chapter what occurred during these unhappy, eventful intervening years.

CHAPTER XXIII

WHEN the Hollisters moved into his home, Pennix's financial and domestic troubles commenced, and they continued to increase until, at the expiration of about six years, Pennix and his wife came to the parting of the ways. Pennix was in an adjoining county when the divorce papers were served. He immediately went home, and as he entered the room where his wife sat at the machine, she arose, and bursting into tears exclaimed, "I came very near deciding in your favor!"

Very near deciding in favor of her husband! Pennix knew then that there had been a council of the female administration, and the powers had decided against him.

For several days pending the trial Pennix sought to have the matter compromised, and among other offers proposed, that they—his wife and himself—move out of the country; but his offers were rejected, as Hattie was not satisfied with anything less than a divorce, the possession of the child, and possession of the property. Pennix would not grant her requirements, so in the slow process of court routine the case was called.

The complaint in the divorce papers alleged failure properly to support the wife and child; incompatibility of temperament, and unpleasant relations with her people.

The judge of the court was a middle-aged man, short, thick, fat, dark, and revealed evidences of high living and dissipation, and although susceptible to female influences he tried to make fair rulings.

The plaintiff was placed on the witness stand, and related her story in answer to questions of an affirmative nature asked by her lawyer, who was a positive, dogmatic sort of a man who cared nothing for the miscarriage of justice, so long as he could win his case. Other witnesses were placed on the stand for the plaintiff, and these declared that they had known the plaintiff to work (sew) late into the small hours of the night. Another witness, a relative of the plaintiff, testified how unpleasant the defendant had made life to his wife's people, and that he did not love them as he should. The testimony was weak throughout, and with the exception of the emotion and tears of the plaintiff, was devoid of any real pathos.

The court then adjourned until 2 P. M., when Pennix was to be heard.

At 2 P. M. the court-room was crowded, and a fever of excitement seemed to prevail. The plaintiff had wisely kept the child, a little boy, from the court-room, both during the forenoon and afternoon sessions, for he would have broken from his mother and gone to his father, thus changing, in a measure, the sympathy that generally goes out to the woman in all cases of divorce.

After the judge had called the court to order, Pennix's attorney asked the judge if his client could address the court? To this the other attorney ob-

jected, and after some hot argument on both sides, the question was referred to the bench for an opinion, and the opinion handed down was in favor of the defendant.

Pennix arose, and took his position at a table in front of the judge. There was a murmur, and then a hush fell upon the audience. Pennix, pale and laboring under the great responsibility that now confronted him, took from his pocket the portrait of his son, and laid it before him on the table as an incentive and stimulant to do his best. The silence of the court-room was painful, and in a voice that trembled with emotion, Pennix said:

"Your Honor, I wish to thank you, not in the mere formality of words, but from a feeling of deep gratitude, for your American rulings. I thank you that I may have the privilege of addressing the bench in my own behalf, and in the interests of the question at issue.

"The only allegation in this complaint that you must listen to and decide that is worthy of your Honor's serious consideration, is that of non-support. The other complaints are too trivial for serious thought. If, as has been alleged, I stand guilty of willful non-support, then I stand guilty of righteous condemnation.

"Your Honor, I cannot answer the charges that have been preferred against me without entering into a detailed review of our married life. This divorce case is a growth, the result of acts and environment that began with our marriage, and has extended up to a recent date.

"I desire to state that I knew the plaintiff when a girl, before she came to Washington and developed into the new woman of the West. Then she was all that I most admired and loved; being possessed of more than ordinary personal beauty and great industry; wonderfully devoted to her father, mother, sisters, and brother, her Sunday-school and her God, and it is not strange that on meeting her again that the old passion should control my actions, and that I considered myself a lucky man when she consented to marry me.

"Her father, whose bitter experience drove him out of the State, pleaded, but in vain, for us to remain in Missouri, but her mother and sisters controlled her, then as now, and we came.

"When we came here she at once commenced sewing to pay off bills that had been accumulating during her absence. I bought property in this city, and suggested to my wife that we had better buy or rent a small place for her mother and feeble-minded sister, a home in which the two unmarried girls could also live and help support those seemingly dependent. I do not know how my wife's family received these suggestions, but I do know that when I returned from a trip to the eastern part of this State they had moved into my house and seemed immensely pleased.

"I did not do much that summer except to work on the place and get up the wood for winter. I still had money coming in every month from Missouri, and there was no work in sight, except harvesting, and I was not then accustomed to such

work. It is true that my expenses were very heavy, but I was then 'the Southern gentleman,' and expected a change for the better soon, and that her people would in due season make other arrangements, as I had expressed a desire to my wife that they should occupy a home to themselves, and that I would do all reasonable things for their assistance.

"I secured a school that fall, but after some personal difficulty with the school board and the county superintendent, who hounded me almost to death, and after the refusal of the school board to give to my wife the primary room, as they had agreed to do, during the winter term, I was permitted to resign under the threat that if I did not do so the superintendent would revoke my certificate. As your Honor knows, the superintendent wanted my position, and a certain relative of the 'Czar' director wanted the primary room.

"I only had about fifty dollars left; my resources from the East were exhausted; I was without work or friends, with two or three families on my hands, and it was mid-winter. I keenly felt the injustice that I had suffered, and knew that to stay in Washington meant disaster and death.

"I explained the situation to my wife, and asked her to go back to Missouri. Her reply thrilled me with joy. She said, 'Pennix, I brought you here, and now if you wish to go back, I am ready to go with you.' But this wifely resolution did not last long. A private council with her people persuaded her to abandon her intention. But she said she

would go to California if I could get in on the railroad down there as operator, for then I could get passes if her mother would care to spend the winters in that State. So I went to California and went in the office with the life-long friend that was the agent and operator at Wayland, Missouri, and under whom I learned telegraphy. I had been there but a few days, and had not yet sent in my application for the position on the road, when I was called home by reason of my wife's delicate health. When I came back I was in worse circumstances than before I left home. It was still winter weather, my wife was in delicate health, and the mother and her feeble-minded child, Kato, and Onell and her children a part of the time were all depending on me for support. I did not know which way to turn, where to go, or what to do.

"I wrote to my brother John for money, and he replied that if my wife and I would come back to Missouri, that he would send tickets for us to return on, but he had no money to spend in Washington. I felt grieved at his reply, but time has shown that he was right. I then wrote to a bank that I had known in better days, and this 'soulless corporation' wired me fifty dollars, and wrote that if that was not sufficient to let them know, and they would double the draft next time.

"I now had sufficient money to tide my family, proper, over until harvest time, when I knew that I could get work, but I could not carry both families until then. Some one besides my wife would have to work.

"Accordingly, I made provision for the maintenance of my families, and departed for the mining and mountainous regions of northern Idaho. Amid the mountains and in the snow I sawed cordwood and endured hardships before unknown; I "batched" and reduced my expenses to a minimum in order to maintain my home. For the sake of my unborn child I made every effort to make my home the place of peace and plenty.

"When I think of those nine months, during which time there was not a thing brought into my house except what either I or my wife brought, the number of idle mouths we fed and the stout backs we clothed, and the criminal advantage taken of my wife's delicate health, and my indulgence on her account, righteous indignation almost stifles my utterance.

"The child, Benjamin, was born in September, and as my reputation was under a cloud here, and my manhood was aroused against the dishonorable administration of school affairs, I went to Whitman County, where I secured a school at fifty dollars a month, of which I sent my wife every cent, except just enough to meet my own personal expenses. At the expiration of the five months' term I came home, and that spring taught a three months' term near here, riding to and from school and using the wages for the expenses of the home. Harvest set in, and I went to work in the harvest field. The following fall I went to Oregon, where I taught and sent my wife the wages, but exchanging schools with a teacher in Walla Walla County, I came to Walla

Walla, where my wife joined me. I walked to and from school, a distance of five miles. After this school was out I was idle until harvest time, when I went to work in the harvest fields, and brought my wife home. Then I got employment in the chop-mill, where I worked for seven weeks. For the first few weeks I left blood stains on every sack that I handled, but I did not care for that, as I saw my wages going into my home and my wife and child getting the benefit, for most of the Hollisters were in Montana. My wife was not sewing then, and had time for her husband and child. But at last I fell over a sack that I was not strong enough to lift, and I was sick for a few days. The doctor advised me not to work any more in the mill, so I engaged a school in Garfield County, and commenced teaching, coming home as often as circumstances and the weather would permit. Just as soon as that four months' term expired, I commenced another term of school in the mountains, where I taught three months. During this time I used my wages for the maintenance of my home and the inmates thereof. Harvest came on and I again went to work. Fall came and I went back to the same school that I had taught the winter before. That winter I taught a six months' term, using the money to support my household, but reserved the last fifty dollars, with which I made a trip on private business to San Francisco. I was gone about two months, and when I returned I found that my wife had sold our property, according to my instructions, and she and the child, her mother

and the feeble-minded girl were living in the upper story of one of the business houses of this city.

"The hot weather was coming on and I wanted to get them out of the brick, so after paying off the debts I took the money that I had left and bought the place where my wife and her people are now living. Locating my family in the new home, I went to work again in the harvest field. When my wife agreed to go to Walla Walla I packed my trunk and went to Lincoln County, where I went to work, and sent her the first ten dollars that I earned. When I could not hear from her I became uneasy, took the train for Pasco, walked from there to Wallula, fifteen miles, to catch the O. R. & N. train to Walla Walla. I found her nervous and excited, and the boy puny and pale from six weeks' confinement in the hot rooms of a third-story brick. I wanted to bring the boy home, but his mother said that her mother had too much to do now, and would not let him come with me. I found the boy without suitable clothing. These I supplied. I again urged my wife not to go back into the store, but she said that she would rather have a position there than to have me, and expressed regret that I had come and wished that I would move on. I came on to my home, but there was no room for me there. I found Onell and her children at my house, her children playing in the yard, while my child was confined within the hot brick walls of a third-story brick in Walla Walla, where it is ten degrees hotter than here. Kato was then idle and visiting in the country, but came to my house the next day, where she

still remains. Onell and her husband were going to the theaters, and the family were getting their groceries at my wife's expense, and they were all waiting idly for my wife to come home to get clothing and supplies to send the feeble-minded child in Vancouver to school. Think of it, your Honor, my wife working six weeks at Walla Walla for nothing, the family getting their supplies on her credit, and all idle and waiting for her to come home to buy and make the clothing for the child in Vancouver!

"I expressed my wrath, but did not use a shotgun or club. Jessup hurried to Walla Walla, where she and my wife were in council for three days, and when my wife came home I saw that we had come to the parting of the ways. Half crazed over the fate of my child, I went down town, and meeting Mr. Sweeney, a friend and an excellent old gentleman who has about finished a successful life, I told him my trouble and asked his advice. He told me to throw away all thoughts of divorce; make my wife the best proposition possible; go to work and the present trouble would pass over. I could not go to my house and look upon the wreckers of my home, so I wrote my wife a note, in which I informed her that I was going to Garfield County, to begin my school, and would return as soon as the present trouble passed away. The following week I received a letter from my real estate agent here, informing me that there were several dollars due on the insurance, and the interest was also due on the seventy-five dollars which I had borrowed

from him last May for my wife to pay off the debts which she had contracted at the stores. The wood that I bought last summer lasted through the winter. But apart from the use of the house, and the payment of these debts, and the clothing and money that I gave to the child, this was all the assistance I gave them during the last six months.

"Throughout these weary years I have always wanted to leave the country, but rather than break up my home I have endured everything, and I never despaired until the Walla Walla episode occurred last summer, when I learned at last that the end had come.

"I will not speak of the absence of the little attentions which a husband so much appreciates from his wife. She has been busy, and I have tried to relieve her of much of her labors at home whenever I thought it wise to do so. I do not know that she has done less sewing for me than for any other member of the family, and that I have been the best friend she ever had or ever will have on this earth. It is true that I have drunk deep of the bitter waters of sorrow and remorse. There seems to be a prejudice here against me which I have been unable to live down, and for that reason, as much as for any other, I have ever sought to leave the State.

"Your Honor, there are some things in this world that a man values as much as he does his wife's relatives, and among these things I would mention *his own honor and standing among men*. This it seems has been of but little concern to my

wife, she being as completely under their control since her marriage as before, and the motto, 'Hat will provide,' is to them what the 'Lord will provide' is to the Christian.

"As my wife's people are directly responsible for this divorce trouble, the dissolution of my home; and the orphanage of my child, I shall make brief mention of a few of their many acts which have been fatal in their influences and effects.

"In the first place I claim the right to determine where we shall live, and while I have never objected to my mother-in-law living with me, I do deny to her the right to decide, through her influence over my wife, that we shall live here. Neither do I accede to her the right to determine the size of my family. She has never raised her hand or voice against the injustice that she has seen going on in my home for years.

"When she was in Missouri and I had a chance to exchange my property for a 160-acre farm located in southwestern Missouri, and the matter was referred to her, she wrote my wife not to sell, not to sign the deed; that as long as she had to sew, she must stay where she was; not knowing that the necessity of my wife's sewing would be removed if this exchange of locations and property could be effected. Then I insisted upon my wife's signing the deed, but she said no, that she had promised her mother to stay right where she was until she came back, and that she would not go, but that I could go if I liked. She was going, she said, to stay where her mother could be with her children.

She must see her children, she said, whether I could be with my son or not. Her injunction and advice to my wife, that there were more children now in the family than could properly be fed and clothed, may be true, but I prefer to feed my own children rather than hers.

"She has been untouched by all my wife's tears; she has been utterly indifferent to my own trials, and remorseless and careless of the happiness of my only son, but I cannot forget that she first dressed the little stranger, nor the bright smile of pleasure that illumined her aged face when she first took him in her arms; neither am I oblivious of the fact that her own life has been full of sorrow.

"Throughout these years I have treated her well for her own sake, as well as for the sake of the woman I made my wife, who is the mother of my child, and in memory of my own mother, who, after making a faint effort to infold me in her arms, whispered, 'God will bless you, my noble son,' then passed into the sunlight of her God. Her prayers were answered and fulfilled at the time of my marriage.

"I will give Kato but little attention. She lived with us most of the time, until she got married last fall. She was naturally lazy and good natured. She would wash her own clothes, but never touch the linen and towels she helped to soil. She would work for my wife if she was paid for it, but not otherwise. She was willing for my wife to go out and sew by the day, and she would stay at home and do the housework for two dollars per week.

"The winter that I taught school in Whitman County, when the baby was at his mother's breast, and his mother would have to get up or sit up nights to change his clothes, this same Kato stayed at home, and my wife would have to get up and make the fires, while my money fed her and her mother and her feeble-minded sister. She worked a while for one of the neighbors, and bought a cloak and a nice dress-pattern which my wife made for her without any compensation. She never brought a pound of coffee or a pound of meat or anything else into the house, except a dime's worth of peaches and a few calico dress-patterns, which my wife had to make, for her mother.

"When Kato went to Missouri my wife robbed herself to fix her up for the trip, and that after she had been doing nothing and living on us for nearly a year, during which time the papers were advertising continually for girls. It is not strange that at parting she should shed tears and exclaim, 'Oh, Hat, I know that I have treated you mean!' When this same Kato had to be brought back from Missouri, it was 'Hat' who had to sell her carpet for thirty dollars, and I contributed fifty dollars for her and her mother, which money, your Honor, has never been paid back and never will be.

"Last summer when they were living on my wife's credit, this same Kato lay around my house waiting for my wife to come home from Walla Walla to complete her wedding trousseau, and then went to the home of her other married sister to get married, taking the feather bed her mother was

using, the footstool from under her feet, and I now understand that she took all the quilts, brought with her from Missouri, excepting enough for one bed.

"Onell is entitled to some credit, inasmuch as she would not let the needs of the family encroach upon the obligations as a mother and wife. She respected the wishes of her husband, and gave to her children her personal care and took care of what they had, and, if she had accorded to my wife the same rights, I would have left her name out of this case. But she, too, has expected 'Hat' to provide; not only for those in the family seemingly dependent, but also for herself and her children in emergencies. While she sees fit to raise as many children as suits herself and her husband, she has always advised my wife not to have any more; giving as her reasons that there are now more children in the family than can be properly cared for.

"When my boy had his first Christmas—he was a little tot, running around in short dresses—Onell and her children came over and took Christmas dinner. This was all right, and we will never forget that Christmas dinner, for it was the most sumptuous feast that any of us ever sat down to, and cost my wife and me about ten dollars cash, besides all the work in its preparation. They took the bed that my wife and I occupied when I was at home, and my wife, my baby, and myself slept on the floor. The weather was intensely cold, and we took cold, the baby having a touch of the croup; but that did not concern them, just as long as they were comfortable and warm. Now, your Honor,

on this particular Christmas my wife gave to each and all her relatives a Christmas present, as she had always done on all preceding Christmas days, and inasmuch as they spent the holidays with us, I thought she could have at least bought something for our little baby boy. I had on the preceding Saturday left all the money that I had, eleven dollars, for my wife to buy Christmas presents with, and the dinner, wood and incidentals were all purchased on credit, and the only present that my family proper received was a five-cent tin horse that I purchased for our baby.

"A year ago last summer, when the child came home from Vancouver and my wife was sewing from home at one dollar a day, she had to agree to pay Onell \$1.50 per week to take the little girl and keep her during the summer, notwithstanding the fact that we had taken care of her for years and she was as much the sister of Onell as she was the sister of my wife, and Onell was under as much obligation to take care of her as my wife.

"Your Honor, I found this out by accident, for be it ever remembered that I have not been in the councils of this family nor in good standing with them for a year or two. Strange to relate, and yet more difficult to believe, is the opinion held, not only by the family, but by my wife also, that 'Hat' can spend her money upon them, and it is none of my business.

"Throughout these years it has been give on our part and take on hers, and in cases of family emergencies she has never been able to assist. She is

younger than my wife, and is under as much obligation to leave her home and work as my wife, but she will not do it.

"Jessup has been in Walla Walla most of the time, and has caused me less expense than any of the other members of the family; but when trouble came from her it was more serious than from any other source. She is more directly responsible for this application for divorce than all of the rest combined.

"It has been her custom to spend the summers at my home in order to have a good old rest and get out of the heat of Walla Walla. During her first visit she helped my wife with some sewing, for which she received half of the gross receipts and her board. We gave a big dinner in her honor, as was our custom then, and my wife waited on the table, being in delicate health at that time. Around that table were assembled the mighty Jessup, Kato, Onell, and her three children, the feeble-minded child, Mrs. Hollister, and myself. The mighty Jessup wanted to know, 'What has "Hat" been doing with her summer wages?' when Onell and Kato with one voice exclaimed, 'She has been buying the baby clothes!' The injustice of the answer stifled me, but neither Mrs. Hollister nor my wife made a correction. The question and answer fired the old blood in my veins, and I informed her graciousness that it was none of her business. This stopped their merriment, and I got a curtain lecture later in the day.

"While it was true that she had been buying

some material for the baby, she had also been buying clothes and provisions for them, and on the walls hung hats, dresses, and ribbons, and on the floor were shoes, and on the table were eatables, and on all their backs were garments that she had worked for and bought—but not a thing had been bought or brought to or for that home except what either I or my wife procured.

“The next summer she came up again, and I hired a rig and took her and some others to the mountains. She and my wife sat on the back seat. The hot eastern sun shone hot and bright into the eyes of our baby, who was on his mother’s lap, and although she was sitting by their side she would not hold the umbrella to shade his eyes either coming or going. That same summer she sat in my house, enjoying the hospitality of my home, and talked divorce to my wife.

“My wife that summer was running a sewing-shop down town to pay for supplies that she had bought for her mother preparatory to her going to Missouri. She was wheeling the baby to and from her work, making two trips a day. Then the little baby would be turned loose in that dusty room to amuse himself as best he could, at a temperature ranging from 100 to 110 degrees, while she plied the needle and made the machine sing in her efforts to pay that debt. She would have to cook three meals a day for Jessup, the feeble-minded youth, herself and her husband, for Jessup would not even get a meal for her sister who was sewing to pay a bill contracted for their mother.

"One day I made a fire in the stove, and asked Jessup to get dinner. I then went to meet my wife whom I knew was on her way from the shop. I met her on the corner near this court-house, and there informed her that I had made a fire, and asked Jessup to get dinner, and if she did not get our dinner that I was going to order her to leave the house. My wife, as usual, took her part, and informed me that if I ordered her sister to leave that she would go too.

"The following winter my wife and baby were in her room at Walla Walla, and the baby soiled her carpet, a carpet that my wife had given her and which I helped to buy, and she ordered my wife and child out of her room. I was there at the time, and met my wife as she was passing through the hall. She was in tears, and with unaffected emotion told me of her trouble. I kissed away the tears, and we found other and better quarters; but imagine, your Honor, if you can, that that same Jessup was at our table within two days eating and laughing as if nothing had happened.

"Your Honor, this series of wrongs against my wife and home I could forgive, but when last summer she sent my wife and child to take care of her lodging-rooms, against my protests and orders, during her temporary indisposition, when she could have made other arrangements; when she sent my wife and son to the hot-fevered rooms of the loft apartment of a third-story brick and to clean the rooms of her lodgers; knowing that temptation lurked therein and that my wife would make any

sacrifice for the sustenance of those she loved; knowing that one of her lodgers was a woman of doubtful reputation, and that our relation as husband and wife was strained she stands guilty of a sin that she can never atone for, and which I will never forget or forgive.

"Your Honor, I can never forget my trip to see my wife and son when they were living in those hot rooms; the impressions yet linger as a frightful nightmare. I had walked over from a distant railroad station, and carried a heavy valise. I was travel-stained and weary. My wife bore on her features every evidence of distress, while the little boy had notably declined in health during the incarceration within the brick walls. But he jumped with joy when he met his 'Diddy.' But alas! his mother could not welcome me as she used to, neither could I take her to my arms as of yore. Your Honor, she is the mother of my child and the woman that I made my wife, and I will protect her name and character down to the grave.

"Your Honor, I have reached life's zenith and shall soon be going down on the other side. I am guilty of sins of commission and omission, but as I survey the past, I do not hesitate to say that the greatest sin of my life is one of omission: omitting to take that darling son from that place shrouded in heat and mystery, and go with him to my friends and his friends. I left the room suddenly and during the momentary absence of the child, but I was not to the foot of the first flight of stairs when I heard his cry. I can never forget that cry as long

as I live; it will never go out of my ears until my broken heart is lost to all consciousness. 'Oh, my Diddy is gone! my Diddy is gone! what will I do! oh, what will I do!' These words pierced my soul as I descended the steps.

"These are the people, your Honor, who control my wife, and who would have the care and custody of the child, if awarded to the mother.

"Sympathy is always with the mother in divorce cases which involve the custody of children, and I wish to say that I yield to no man in my profound sympathy for the plaintiff. She deserves a better, happier life than she has had to live. I sympathize with her in her blind, mistaken devotion to her unworthy kindred; for there is no sacrifice, however great, that they do not demand at her hands.

"If she were foot-loose and free, if she had only the child and herself to care for, I would have given to her the custody of the child and helped to care for him and for her as long as the necessity exists. But if such were the circumstances, we would not be in this court to-day.

"But as she has decided that the child shall lose his father; has decided against her home and her husband; has decided that there shall be no father's hand to guide the child through the period of youth; has broken my heart as well as his, if he lives to know the truth; has decided, at the instigation of her people, that he shall have no sister nor brother, and will require him at an early age to take up the load that she cannot carry many years longer, and

as I have no other but him and can give to him my personal care and can give to him a home where righteousness and love have their abode, I ask for his custody and control; not from the promptings of a father's heart, but for the future good of the child.

"Your Honor, this child was conceived, molded, and born amid the tears, remorse, and separation of his parents, which conditions have been agony to my soul.

"Professor Burbank of the Leland Stanford University, who is to the world of mind what Edison is to the world of matter, says that in view of the circumstances and environments of his birth that I must live with him and lead him along a religious life. Nothing but religious faith and belief in God will enable him to sustain the trials of life.

"Your Honor, this child has had neither father nor mother since he left his mother's breast. She has been busy providing for her dependent kin, and I have been away from home most of the time, working for the household, and in consequence he has been neglected. He is and has been a neglected child. His grandmother, who is his principal custodian, is absent-minded, and forgets him when waiting on other things. One morning last winter I came home at eleven o'clock and found him running around in his nightshirt, which was without buttons. The boy was then almost sick with a cold. As soon as he saw me, he exclaimed, 'Oh, my Diddy has come, my Diddy has come!' and ran

barefooted and almost naked out in the snow to meet me.

"I gathered the little one in my arms, and on entering the house I wanted to know why he had not been dressed, and his custodian said that he was so troublesome to dress that she had not undertaken the task. I then said that I would take him out with me where I was teaching, and it would be a pleasure for us to take care of him.

"I found his clothes in bad plight, needing patches and without buttons, and also dirty. After he had eaten his breakfast I took him down town, and replaced his thin cotton clothing with a good quality of woollens, including some woolen sweaters, for, as these did not have to be washed and had no buttons, I thought they would be suitable for winter wear. I have often gone home and found him by himself in the sun or shade, melancholy, lonesome, and forgotten.

"Your Honor, his environment at home is bad, and at times reprehensible: swearing, desecration of the Sabbath, vulgar stories, an absence of religious training and personal neglect. They are now planning for him to take up his mother's load just as soon as he is able. God forbid that he too shall sacrifice his life for the people who have made him an orphan and put upon him the stigma of being the child of divorced parents! Let him go with me, whom he has loved better than all others, and with whom he would rather be than with any one else.

"Again and again have I known him to refuse

little trips even when accompanied with offers of reward, little trips that children highly prize, because it would take him from his 'Diddy.'

"He too at this early age knows the pangs of partings and separations, emotions which affect him strangely. When I leave him or go to start he holds onto my legs and looks into my face with tears streaming down his little face and cries, 'Diddy, don't go! I have but you; I want you, I need you. Don't leave me; oh, don't leave me, Diddy! Don't leave me, Diddy, again, I want you so bad!'

"The time that I left him, after the last election, I had been with him over a week, and when I had to go he hung on me from the house to the front gate, crying and pleading with me not to go; but when at length I loosened his grip I noticed that his tears suddenly ceased to flow, and he fell upon the ground in despair. There were no tears in his eyes then, and as I looked in silence upon his still, pale face, lying low at my feet, the world seemed to fade out of mind. Then a flush and flame passed through my brain, which almost forced me into the house to wreak righteous vengeance upon those who have been the cause and indifferent witnesses of such scenes for years.

"I gathered the little loving child in my arms and hugged him tight to my heart, with my hot tears falling upon his face, and carried him back into the house and assured him that I would not go that day. Then we came out and put the horse away, and although I had twenty miles to ride in

the morning to my school, I was there on time, and when he awoke next morning he found his 'Diddy' gone.

"Your Honor, I ask for the child Benjamin that he may escape his and his father's enemies. They have demanded the last pound of flesh.

"Not content after the daughter and sister has put in the best years of her life for them; not content that she might rest from the weary load that she has carried with such signal patience and industry year after year, even denying herself the privilege of marriage for their sake that she might the better work for their maintenance; not content to leave us alone after marriage; not content to live on our labor amid tears and separations; not willing that we should sell out and leave this accursed land; not satisfied at the parting of husband and wife; not content with their decree that my son shall have no brother or sister, but only the association of the clan, whom he despises, for his future and present companions, they now demand that he shall lose his father, bear the stigma of being the child of divorced parents; that they shall have his custody and control, so he may take up the burden in early years, and support them as I and his mother have done.

"I plead not for myself, but for him, who has ever since he could talk pleaded with me not to leave him.

"Your Honor, I forsook friends, relatives, position, and a good name and standing, and in blind devotion came to Washington. Here these laws

may take my property, wife and child, but neither these laws nor this people can touch my character, or crush my spirit, and now, your Honor, all I ask of this court, of this State, is the privilege of taking my son and quitting its boundary forever. May God Almighty help you in your decision which will determine the future life of my child!

"Your Honor, paradoxical as it may seem, it is nevertheless true that I have been tortured at the rack; tasted the woes and bitterness of family dissolution, because I dared to protect my wife, my child, and my home.

"Oh, Judge, ye man of Law, who decides the destiny of the innocent as well as the guilty——"

The broken sentence died on Pennix's lips; he tottered and fell, and was carried unconscious from the room.

Pennix was conveyed to his boarding-house, where for two weeks he lingered between life and death. Finally he rallied, and in a few days was able to go down town. On calling on his attorney he was informed that he could confidentially advise him that everything would go to the plaintiff. No decision had yet been rendered, he said, but he had obtained that information. That was sufficient. Pennix returned to his room, and there wept in the agony of his soul.

Ye men of God, lawyers and judges of the law; ye men who make the law, pause and survey those broken hearts. Remember, too, that thousands suffer in the same way from the lax divorce laws of

the land and through the abundant excuses and pretexts that can be conjured up in the fertile minds of the lawyers. There are about thirty clauses on the statute books of the State of Washington, any one of which will obtain a divorce; besides, the superior judge is given discretionary power to grant a divorce in the absence of law.

Under such circumstances and conditions, is it strange that the divorce mill is running all the time, and broken hearts and homes are met with at every turn? If the husband and wife cannot live together in reasonable harmony and peace, let a decree of separation be granted them prohibiting each from ever again entering into any other married relation. This would teach the husband and wife to compromise and endure differences, and outside pressure would not avail.

How many after they have gone to court and secured the much-coveted divorce will throughout their lives regret and lament their hasty action! But if a decree of separation had been granted they could, and in most cases would, repent of and atone for their folly. How often in after years, when a calm and unprejudiced view is taken of a divorce case, do the parties involved see how easily it might have been avoided, and how foolish and sinful they had been.

In the name of every home in America; in the name of every parent's heart that throbs with parental love; in the name of morality and immortality; in the name of humanity itself, and in the name of Him who said, "What God hath joined

together, let no man put asunder," Pennix here and now lifts his voice against this woeful contagion, this destroyer of homes and souls, and he pleads for stringent divorce laws, or laws that do not recognize divorces at all, save and except the one offense.

Purge the statutes of these lax and dreary divorce laws! Men and women may then rejoice in safe domestic peace, will rejoice that homes will not be wrecked at every turn and children left in the dreary land of orphanage.

CHAPTER XXIV

PENNIX had now either to leave the country or go to the insane asylum at Medical Lake. He realized that his mind was wandering and his health was failing. But he knew that he must save his mind and health for future years, for perhaps his boy would yet need his "Diddy." After reaching this decision he took the first train that left the city. He did not collapse until he passed through a village where a few years before he was in the habit of taking that same train on Friday evenings when going from his school to his home, then in Walla Walla. In those days all was expectation and joy at meeting the woman he loved in spite of her weakness and foibles and the bright-eyed baby boy, who on seeing his father would exclaim in joy, "Oh, my Diddy has come, my Diddy has come!" and run into his arms. Now was the night of despair. He lay prostrate in the car seat, and in the agony of his soul groaned aloud, weeping hot and bitter tears. True, he was leaving a country that he thoroughly despised, but he was also leaving his darling son, whom he loved better than all the world besides, and for whose sake he had endured years of misery, disappointment, and misfortune.

His trip was attended with too much grief to

relate here. It had required six days, and as Pennix had been for three days without food, he decided to stop in southern Kansas, as the harvest was then beginning. He stopped at Wellington with just two coppers in his pocket, and proceeding to a hotel he turned over his valise to the landlord with the remark that he was hungry and had no money, and would leave his valise as security until he could redeem it. "Very well," said the landlord, "but you don't look like a man that has no money. Have you just come on the train?" Pennix informed him that he had, and expected to go to work in the harvest field just as soon as he could get a job.

Next day he went out into the harvest field, and began work at \$1.50 per day, shocking wheat during the long hot days of June. After two weeks' work he went back to town, paid his hotel bill, and went to El Reno, Oklahoma. Here he joined a threshing outfit and worked at \$1.00 per day, pitching bundles in the field for several weeks.

The "gip water" which he often had to drink was very debilitating, but the country was full of men and teams waiting for the opening of the strip, and many, like Pennix, were on the side of want and distress, and the farmers there were not slow to take advantage of the hard circumstances of the immigrants and would-be homeseekers. At last Pennix, a mere skeleton of his former self, could not pitch another bundle. It was simply a case of physical exhaustion. He then returned to El Reno, where he met his nephew, Leon Frazier, a young

man of matchless sympathy and noble heart. They now waited together for the opening of the strip, or rather for the registration, which was only a few days ahead.

Oklahoma is the child of Kansas, a full cousin of Texas and Missouri, and a half sister to the Indian Territory. In going from Kansas into Oklahoma one cannot tell where Kansas stops and Oklahoma begins. At this time values may have been overestimated, but land found ready sale at Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois prices. Never in the history of any country was such development and wealth reached as quickly as in the case of Oklahoma. There are vast areas of prairie country, where one looks and longs in vain for a hill to break the level panorama.

The population is complex. It is true the majority is from Kansas, while Missouri and Texas are about evenly represented, but there are many from other States. The Yankee is there, the extreme Southerner, the Dutch in goodly numbers, and many negroes and Indians.

The beautiful Indian maidens have long since abandoned their aboriginal costumes and clothing, and are in many cases well educated and refined. They are marrying white men just as fast as they can.

Some beautiful women, possessing strong physiques, are among the descendants of the red men of the forest, and Pennix believes that Oklahoma some day will produce the most brilliant orators and

military leaders the world has ever known, as well as the brawn and sinew of the nation, and these will be the descendants of Texans and Missourians and the Pocahontases of Indianola.

In no other State has he seen as much dashing gallantry and chivalry as he has witnessed among the young men of this country.

Business was almost suspended during the few days prior to the President's proclamation which would show him how the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache strip would be opened, and when it would be opened for settlement. For days the "paramount question" in Oklahoma was, "Has the President's proclamation been issued yet?"

At length the proclamation came, and all was bustle and excitement in El Reno. The city was full of people and the country for miles around was a vast camp, and the town buzzed like a beehive.

Pennix and Leon fell into line the afternoon of the day before the registration began. It was a beautiful moonlight night, the heavens were full of stars, and a gentle balmy breeze came up from the Gulf.

The line formed in companies, beginning with A.

Each company consisted of one hundred persons. Pennix was number 70, Company A, and Leon was 71, same company. As soon as Company A organized the women were all excused, given a card showing their number, and permitted to go to their rooms and tents for the night, being assured that they could resume their positions in the company the next morning. All the other companies ex-

tended the same courtesy. At 10 o'clock P. M. the line fell back, and the boys spread their blankets upon the ground.

All that night men kept arriving and falling into position by moonlight until the line, in loops and circles, wound around the school-house, residences, and across yards. The best of good will prevailed. Songs were sung, and when a familiar one was started, like "Hail Columbia," "Home Sweet Home," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "Break the News to Mother," the whole line joined in the song. For be it remembered that if ever there was a crowd distinctly American, it was the army of men and women who registered for the drawing of the Comanche and Kiowa lands. There were the typical cowboys, the Kansas farmer, the Oklahoma rancher, and the Missourian; in fact, doctors, lawyers, merchants, clerks, mechanics, and men of every political and religious creed.

The elixir of perennial youth was there in pint and half-pint bottles, and the bottles sent up and down the line until emptied, but so far as Pennix was able to ascertain, and the matter was well investigated, there were no shooting-irons in the line.

"No, I would not bring a gun," was the answer from each and all.

A few minutes after nine o'clock the registration began. The line was about three hundred yards long, two deep, and contained about two thousand persons. The line, or that part of it in the rear, was restive but patient.

It now became evident that there were more peo-

ple in line than could register at that booth for the next year. A heavy square of men now formed on the side opposite the organized line for the ostensible purpose of breaking the line, which was only two deep.

At that opportune time a vast throng of men in line, whose positions were some distance down the line, came up to protect the line and thwart the scheme of the "sooners." A general hand-to-hand contest now seemed imminent, and the women began to leave their positions in the line.

Pennix was now near the door of the registration booth, and next to the columns of the square of "sooners." Each side now formed a solid square, and fistic encounters were momentarily expected to begin.

But the chief from the inside, who represented Uncle Sam, came to the door and said that he would not register a man or woman who did not have a ticket showing his company, and the number of the company, and that he was instructed from Washington to recognize the lines already formed. That settled it, and the hot, sweltering malcontents slunk back to the rear and had to wait their turn.

A blank application was handed each person, and the notaries present took the applicants' affidavits. A certificate of registration was then furnished them, which gave the person the privilege to go over the land that was then opened to settlement, with a view to the selection of his claim should he draw a prize at the time of the "draw."

Pennix was much disappointed that the land

should be disposed of by lottery instead of a "race," for in the lottery he stood no better chance than any one else, which would not have been the case in the "race." Again, the lottery business brought thousands of men and women there who would not have come to a race, and thousands of men registered for the "draw" who had never worked a day on the farm in their lives, and never expected to. Their only object was speculation.

Soon after the registration the "draw" set in. A great wheel shuffled and mixed the numbers. Seven boys blindfolded would draw out the numbers and hand them to tellers, who would read the numbers to the waiting multitude, and then pass the numbers on to the clerks for registration in the land books. On the third day of the draw, and at ten A. M., the number 70 was read aloud.

Pennix and Leon gave a cheer, as that was Pennix's number.

Pennix, without an hour's delay, was on his way to the Southwest. He rode twenty-seven miles that day, and, as the sun was going down, he found what he wanted, and as no other had left any signs of staking out that claim, he drove a stake and named his possession the "Rink." The "Rink" was on the banks of a clear stream of water, and near his stake was a beautiful spring gurgling forth from a bluff of rocks. Immediately back of the bluff was a forest of small trees, while to the east stretched a prairie country, dotted here and there with groves of woods. To the southwest and northwest the timbered land seemed to predominate.

About a hundred yards to the northwest two small streams came together; the timber was good, and the soil unusually fertile. Pennix recognized this to be a good claim.

As darkness came on he built a fire, sliced a jack-rabbit, put it on the coals, and lay down to rest and watch that no man or woman came too near the "Rink." Now and then he heard the report of a gun, which he always answered by a similar signal.

Presently he heard the sound of a horse's feet and on looking toward the northeast he saw a man on horseback. The horseman was soon within hailing distance of the fire, and called aloud:

"Say, neighbor, are you at home? If so, may I speak with you?"

Pennix answered him in the affirmative, and putting his pistol in his hip pocket, went out to meet him.

"I was headed to the south of here, but on seeing a fire, and as night had set in, I changed my course and came here," spoke the stranger.

"'Light, old man; stake out your pony and share a jack-rabbit that I have just broiled on the coals. I want to talk to you."

"Thank you very much. I shall surely avail myself of your offer, as I am so hungry that I could eat a jack, ears and all, 'live or dead."

As the two strangers were eating the jack they went over the claim proposition and locations. No time was to be lost, as men and teams and guns were heard toward the northwest.

"What is the show to locate near you?" inquired the stranger.

"Good; come with me, and be quick, man! We have not a minute to lose. Come!"

Pennix and the stranger mounted their ponies, and in less time than it requires to tell it, had crossed the river, the stranger planting his banner between the two creeks before mentioned.

It was none too soon, as a squad of men came following them across the stream. "Move on," were the words spoken to them.

They moved on, and hearing the splashing of water, Pennix knew they had crossed the creek and moved off the peninsula.

Pennix and the stranger then returned to the fire, where they examined their plats and maps, so as to make no mistake.

"Come, neighbor," said the stranger, "we must register just as soon as the door opens in the morning."

They mounted their horses, and took a nap next morning on the steps of the building where the "lucky ones" filed their claims.

There was of course no sleep at El Reno for any one who was interested in the draw, unless, overpowered with weariness, he fell asleep involuntarily. The names of the lucky ones were printed on several billboards, bulletins, and other places, as the draw went on. The draw closed that day, and, to Pennix's deep regret, Leon did not get a claim.

Leon wanted Pennix to return with him to his home in Missouri, but Pennix declined. He was

resolved to live henceforth on his Rink. He built a cabin and made some necessary improvements, and here he lives in seclusion the life of a recluse, never attending public gatherings or taking any part in affairs affecting the public weal. Here, when sitting in his cabin door or when strolling beneath the light of a Southern moon, he thinks of his home in the far Northwest or in happy dreams he hears the words, "Oh, my Diddy has come, my Diddy has come!" or, in a woman's voice, "I brought you here and will go back to Missouri with you."

Or in troubled sleep he hears the cry, "Diddy, don't go! I need you; I have but you, don't leave me; don't leave me!" and "I almost decided in your favor."

Oh, the pathos of an ever-present silence!

Here in the shadow of the evening Pennix awaits, broken-hearted, the coming of the morn. Here he tries to forget the world, and is by the world forgotten, save and except by him far to the northwest. Perhaps some day he will come to his "Diddy," if only to close his eyes at the death moment.

